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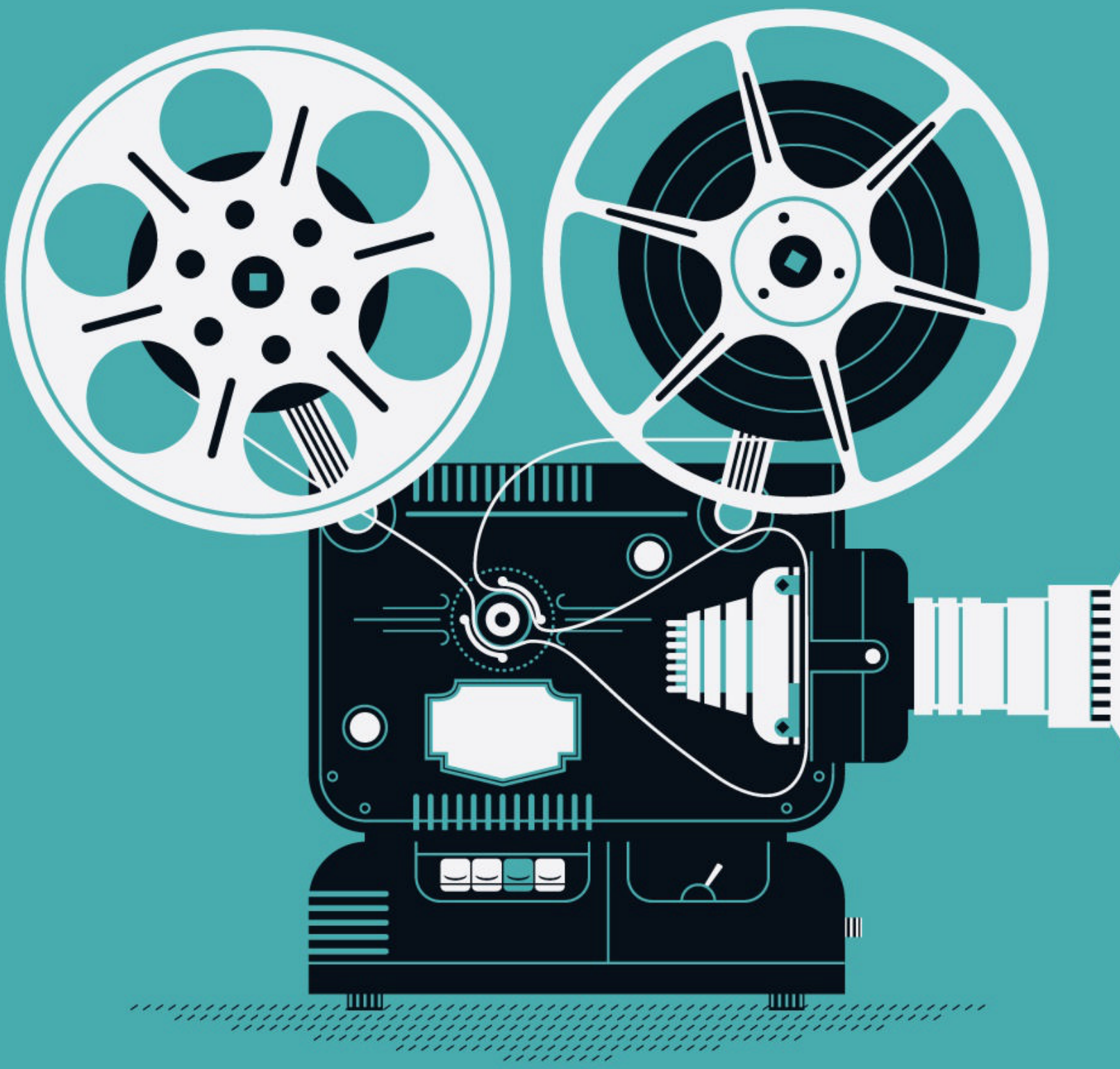


TOTALLY DOPE MUST-SEE MOVIES!

It's been an amazing few months for big blockbuster movies, from the desert epic Dune to the hugely entertaining Suicide Squad, it's been a solid season for the blockbusters of late. However, thanks to the rise in streaming services, amazing movies have appeared that might have flown underneath the popular radar. These are some movies that you probably haven't seen, but definitely should this new year, ASAP!

The Card Counter

Oscar Isaac has proven himself to be part of the Hollywood elite in numerous outstanding performances and The Card Counter is another excuse for this talented actor to flex his thespian muscles. The story, crafted by legendary writer and director Paul Schrader, sees a former convict trying to earn a living by playing cards, something he is rather good at. As the story progresses you learn more about Isaac's character and everything does not seem as straightforward with him as first appeared. Not only does the film feature the ever-talented Isaac's but also sees some great performances from Tiffany Haddish and screen legend Willem Dafoe. It's a slow-burn thriller that is guaranteed to keep you guessing until the final credits and is one of the best movies to be released this year.

Cryptozoo

One of the divisive movies to come out this year, Cryptozoo is an animation tour-de-force that will shock as much as it will fascinate. A hand-crafted hallucinatory film from renowned animator Dash Shaw features the voice of Lake Bell as the character Lauren Gray, an army brat who grew up outside Okinawa following WWII and has a special connection to the Baku, the Japanese cryptid who consumes nightmares. The Baku ate her nightmares as a child and she is indebted to its protection. As an adult, Lauren seeks out cryptids to deliver them to safety in a Cryptozoo, a haven-slash-theme park. But when the army also seeks to capture the Baku and use it as a weapon, chaos ensues. It's a tough movie to watch, but one that is essential to see. With wonderful animations, a truly adult-themed story, and solid voice acting, Cryptozoo is the weirdest and maybe the best movie you haven't seen yet.

Riders of Justice

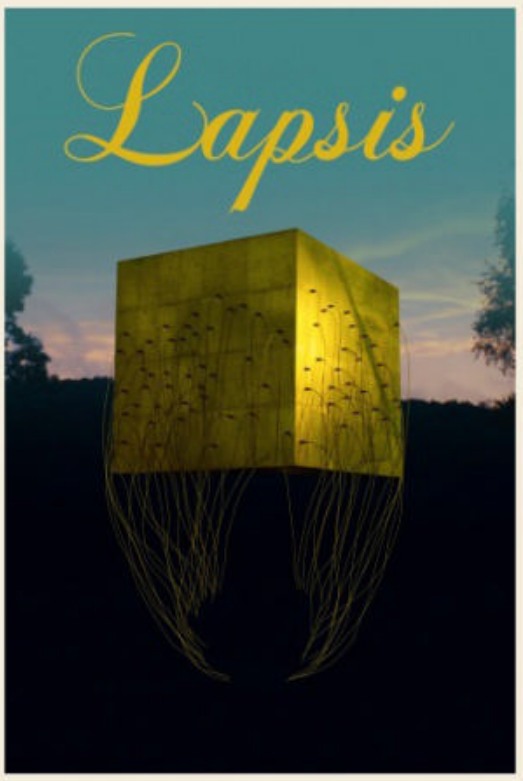
From director Anders Thomas Jensen, Riders of Justice is an action-comedy that follows recently-deployed military man Markus, played by the wonderful Mads Mikkelsen, who is forced to return home to care for his teenage daughter, Mathilde, after his wife is killed in a tragic train accident. It appears to have been plain bad luck, until data analyst Otto, a survivor of the wrecked train, surfaces, and claims foul play. Now suspecting that his wife was murdered in a carefully orchestrated assassination plot, Markus teams up with Otto, alongside his eccentric colleague Lennart and his even stranger friend Emmenthaler, to embark on a revenge mission to find those responsible. Riders of Justice strikes just the right tone of humor and pathos as Mikkelsen offers a masterful turn that's at once deadpan and deadly serious.

Oxygen

A French-language sci-fi film that perfectly captures the sense of claustrophobia, fear, and anxiety. A woman awakens in an airtight medical cryogenic unit and discovers that she is trapped and that the unit's oxygen levels are falling rapidly. Suffering from memory loss, she does not remember who she is or how she got there. She is assisted by an advanced A.I. named M.I.L.O. (Medical Interface Liaison Officer), but it refuses to open the cryo unit without an administrator code. The pod's artificial intelligence system then informs her that she has less than half of her oxygen left due to an unspecified mechanical failure, and she only has about an hour to figure out what happened, who put her there, and how to get out before she suffocates. It's a great thriller filled with numerous twists and turns that will keep you on the edge of your seat.

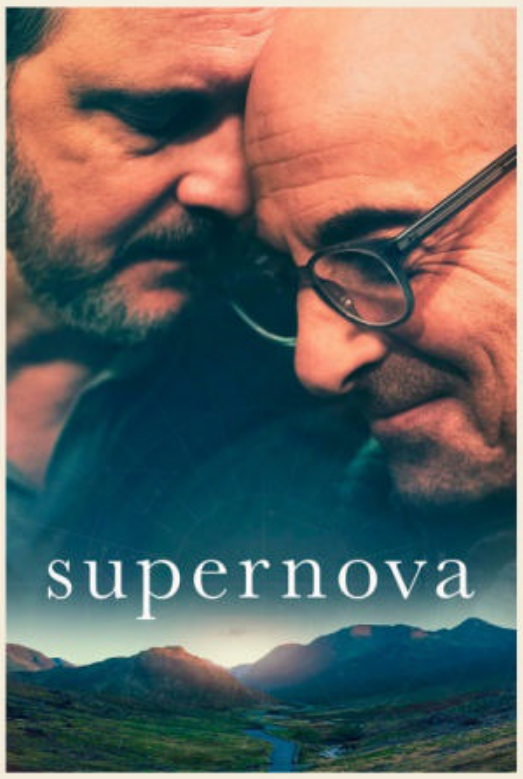
Barb and Star Go to Vista Del Mar

The story of best friends Barb and Star, who leave their small midwestern town for the first time to go on vacation in Vista Del Mar, Florida, where they soon find themselves tangled up in adventure, love, and a villain's evil plot to kill everyone in town. What might seem like your typical mass appeal comedy on the surface quickly reveals itself to quite the weird, unconventional comedy, and stars Kristen Wiig and Annie Mumolo are in their element in this off-the-wall comedy. Special mention must go to Jamie Dornan's lovesick villainous henchman Edgar, who gets one of cinema's great musical numbers, flouncing, splitting, leaping, and twirling around on a beach. Don't let the basic premise and trailer fool you, this is a unique comedy that will have you laughing out loud.



Lapsis

In a parallel present, delivery man Ray Tincelli is struggling to support himself and his ailing younger brother. After a series of two-bit hustles and unsuccessful swindles, Ray takes a job in a strange new realm of the gig economy: trekking deep into the forest, pulling cable over miles of terrain to connect large, metal cubes that link together the new quantum trading market. As he gets pulled deeper into the zone, he encounters growing hostility and the threat of robot cablers and must choose to either help his fellow workers or to get rich and get out. Lapsis is a unique take on the gig economy through a mysterious, sci-fi fashion, and although initially a slow burn, the movie will drag you in towards the end and leave you breathless.

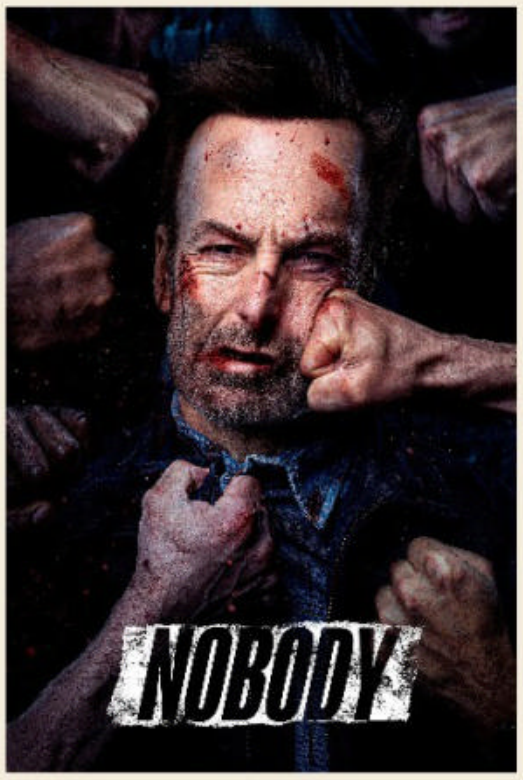


Supernova

Sam and Tusker, partners of 20 years, are traveling across England in their old RV visiting friends, family, and places from their past. Since Tusker was diagnosed with early-onset dementia two years ago, their time together is the most important thing they have. As the trip progresses, however, their ideas for the future clash, secrets come out, and their love for each other is tested as never before. Ultimately, they must confront the question of what it means to love one another in the face of Tusker's illness. With brilliant performances from Colin Firth and Stanley Tucci, Supernova understands the tragedy and triumph of love and is a deeply moving film.

Promising Young Woman

Even though Promising Young Woman was released in January of this year, it is still seen as one of the best and most underrated movies of the year. Starring the always incredible Carey Mulligan, Promising Young Woman sees her as a medical school dropout whose life was derailed when she and her best friend were sexually assaulted by another classmate. However nothing in Cassie's life is what it appears to be, she's wickedly smart, tantalizingly cunning, and she's living a secret double life by night. Now, an unexpected encounter is about to give Cassie a chance to right the wrongs from the past. It's a wonderful movie dealing with sexual harassment, revenge, and struggling with your inner demons.



Nobody

Hutch Mansell, a suburban dad, overlooked husband, nothing neighbor — a "nobody." When two thieves break into his home one night, Hutch's unknown long-simmering rage is ignited and propels him on a brutal path that will uncover dark secrets he fought to leave behind. There are definitely comparisons to be made to the John Wick series, but Nobody is set apart thanks to the brilliant performance from Bill Odenkirk as a man brought low by self-deception and, consequently, resurrected by facing his inherent angry identity. Also, look out for brilliant guest star appearances by the great Christopher Loyd and Rza.

The Dig

As WWII looms, a wealthy widow hires an amateur archaeologist to excavate the burial mounds on her estate. When they make a historic discovery, the echoes of Britain's past resonate in the face of its uncertain future . Starring Carey Mulligan and Ralph Fiennes, The Dig is a wonderful examination of life's frailty and the importance of seizing every brief moment of joy and love. As the dig goes on and our characters learn more about the past and the people who came before them, the small gestures of their own lives begin to feel both inconsequential and seismic.

The Night House

Another excellent thriller to be released this year is the brilliant The Night House. Starring Rebecca Hall as a grieving widow who is coming to terms with the recent suicide of her husband. However, her grieving is constantly interrupted with strange noises, visions, and clues that her now-deceased husband was not all he claimed to be. Grief and guilt are an identical monster in this disquieting thriller, which gets suspenseful mileage out of shrewd perspective-manipulating imagery and skillful pacing. Most of all, though, it benefits from Hall, whose superb turn as the devastated Beth is equal parts solemn and seething, vulnerable and fierce, unstable and assured. A wonderful film that twists and turns at every corner and a fascinating study on grief and guilt.

Julianna Leone

Model | @JuliannaLeone.

Photographer Chris V Linton | @chrisvlinton

MUA @cherrydollsbeauty

Ibanez

MOTOWN

Such an absolute honour to have you on feature FHM! What has your journey as a certified bombshell been like so far? It has been nothing short of amazing. Starting my year off being featured in FHM feels surreal.

We are blown away by your drive and professionalism, can you tell us what some of the things that motivate you to stay on top of your game are? It all goes back to the way I was raised. At an early age, it was instilled in me that with discipline and hard work anything I wanted was within reach. Hard work will always prevail.

Top 3 best moments of your career? Advocating for the Canadian Cancer Center at the CCMA's with Brett Kissel and fellow Cancer Survivors. Being featured in Playboy Australia's December issue and last but certainly not least, being featured in FHM Canada.

What is your favourite chill time activity? Reading while cuddling with one of my dogs.

We are taking you out on your ultimate date and we really want to knock this one out the ballpark, what would that entail? First, you would come and pick me up at my house roses in hand. Then you help me pack quickly because you booked us a vacation in the Bahamas so I can finally swim with the pigs.

What are, hands down, your absolute favourite things to do? I live for travelling, going to concerts and working out.

3 ultimate deal breakers when it comes to men? 1. When his words don't match his actions 2. When his hygiene isn't up to par with mine 3. When he doesn't want to date me every day for the rest of his life. That is to say, he needs to be old school and romantic

You have one last chance to do something you have always wanted to do, no limits on anything, what are you doing? I'm going sky diving and then I'm jumping on a flight to the Bahamas to go swim with the pigs in Exuma!!

Where would you say is your favourite place to be in the world and why? Somewhere in the Caribbean, floating in the water catching a tan.

What is currently playing on loop on your playlist? Music is life. Lately I have been on an afro beat kick. Wizkid has a few good songs, True Love, Mood and Essence. Silence By: Popcaan. Running By: LADIPOE & Fireboy DML. Of course, there will always be some old school rap in my play list. Songs like, Money, Power & Respect By: THE LOX and Heart of the City By: Jay Z, will never get old.

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? They can follow me on Instagram @ JuliannaLeone.

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? We have all been through something that has changed us. Never judge a person by the chapter you walked in on. Just as it is impossible to understand the behaviour of the bee without looking at the hive, so it is impossible to truly understand the behaviour of an individual without looking at their system of interactions. There are irrational aspects to every person. If we were rational beings, we would seek to avoid pain and experience pleasure. Love, fear, insecurity, and familiarity are the powerful emotions that keep people chained to a life they do not want to live. Fear is the most blinding of all the emotions. While love is the most fulfilling emotion. It makes us feel superior and gives us a sense of significance. Intelligence alone doesn't conquer emotions. What is required is wisdom. Wisdom only comes from experience. Believe in yourself. Work hard for what you want and please remember to enjoy the process.

RETROSPECTIVE!

TOP 10 GAMES OF 2021

Last year was a mixed bag for gamers, with some great titles coming out, but the lack of new console availability has put a slightly sour taste in the mouths of gamers worldwide. However, with stocks coming back in for the New Year's rush, more gamers will get their hands on the exciting new consoles. Which in turns means access to some of the best games of last year. Speaking of, here is our list of the best games you have to play from 2021.

Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy

After the mild disappointment of the Marvel's Avengers game, Eidos Montreal finally gives the Marvel universe a game that lives up to the spectacular movies. Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy is a fantastically fun game that truly captures the humor and action of the beloved series. Once again though, this game is based on the comic books and not the movies, so don't expect to see the faces of Chris Pratt or Dave Bautista or the intense sarcasm of Bradley Cooper's voice as Rocket Raccoon. But don't let this deter you, Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy is an incredibly fun game that also looks amazing on the new consoles. You play as Star-Lord, leading the team through combat and puzzles as you try to stop a chain of disasters you might just have been the cause of. It contains all the laughs one would expect from a Guardians outing and some really fun gameplay as you travel the galaxy on your own Guardians adventure. This is a must-play for any Marvel fan out there.

Deathloop

Very few studios have nailed the immersive sim genre better than French-based studio Arkane Lyon, having delivered such excellent games as Prey and the critically acclaimed Dishonored series. And in 2021 they took their successful formula into the next generation of consoles with the brilliantly titled Deathloop. In Deathloop, two rival assassins are trapped in a mysterious time loop on the island of Blackreef, doomed to repeat the same day for eternity. As Colt, the only chance for escape is to end the cycle by assassinating eight key targets before the day resets. Learn from each cycle - try new paths, gather intel, and find new weapons and abilities. Do whatever it takes to break the loop. All in all, Deathloop is another fantastic game from Arkane and if you were a fan of the Dishonored series then you'll feel right at home with Deathloop. It's a beautiful game with incredibly fun mechanics that will keep you coming back time after time for your next run at breaking the loop.

Hades

Initially released in 2018 as an early access game, Supergiant Games' Hades made an immediate impression on both fans and critics and in 2021 this celebrated game made its debut on Xbox and PS5, with the former version being a day one Gamepass title. In recent years there has been an explosion in roguelike games, a subgenre of role-playing video games characterized by a dungeon crawl through procedurally generated levels, turn-based gameplay, grid-based movement, and permanent death of the player character. And although there are tons of games out there that are incredible roguelikes, Hades is the one that perfectly captures the essence of these games. Hades combines the best aspects of Supergiant's critically acclaimed titles, including the fast-paced action of Bastion, the rich atmosphere and depth of Transistor, and the character-driven storytelling of Pyre. Hades is a wonderful game with rich, atmospheric presentation and unique melding of gameplay and narrative elements. The hand-painted graphics along with the superb combat makes for an immense game. If you've never experienced the magic of a roguelike, or you're a seasoned pro, then Hades is a must-play.

Forza Horizon 5

Forza Horizon has set the benchmark for over-the-top, open-world racers across platforms. Mixing incredible visuals with fantastically fun driving in stunning environments, in the greatest cars known to man. And with Forza Horizon 5, the bar has once again been lifted on what might arguably be the best racing game ever made. One of the hallmarks of the series has always been its exotic locations, from driving around the south of France to racing through on the golden beaches of Australia, Forza Horizon has become synonymous with big open spaces. And in Forza Horizon 5, the series makes its very first trip to South America as you get to race around the beautiful and varied landscapes of Mexico. Go on breathtaking expeditions across a world of striking contrast and beauty. Discover living deserts, lush jungles, historic cities, hidden ruins, pristine beaches, vast canyons, and a towering snow-capped volcano. With incredible graphics, specifically designed for new consoles and arguably the most fun you'll have on a track. Even if you're not a fan of racing games, you need to download Horizon 5, since it's free on GamePass.

Twelve Minutes

This superb indie game is a real-time top-down interactive thriller that puts you, the player, in a seemingly inescapable twelve-minute time loop. However, with each twelve-minute run, you learn something new, to utilize in your next run to try and stay alive, avoid your wife being arrested, and dodging the suspicious detective. It's an incredibly smart premise and each twelve-minute run is a tense scramble to avoid the mistakes you made in the previous run. Featuring the voice talent of top Hollywood talent, James McAvoy, Daisy Ridley, and Willem Dafoe, Twelve Minutes creates a dream-like tension and claustrophobia, unlike any other game before it. Along with the wonderful voice cast and truly tense gaming moments, Twelve Minutes is highly recommended if you are a fan of movies like Memento and The Shining, plus it is free on Game Pass right now, so you have no excuse not to try out one of the most unique games of 2021.

Psychonauts 2

In gaming, it's extremely rare for a game that was a commercial failure to get a sequel, yet Double Fine's 2005 Psychonauts is one of the few exceptions. Now 16 years later, and with the support of Microsoft, who acquired the studio in 2019, Psychonauts 2 is finally here and it's everything the fans could've hoped for. Schafer is of course legendary for his wonderful sense of humor and unforgettable characters from Grim Fandango and Brutal Legend, and his hot streak continues with Psychonauts 2 as he and his team deliver an inventive and unforgettable cinematic story that mixes Schafer's unique humor with tales of intrigue and plot twists galore. You will get to explore unique and wonderful environments using Raz's ability to dive into people's brains to battle their inner demons, unlock hidden memories and resolve their emotional baggage. Much like original Psychonauts, the sequel is very much a platforming game, seeing you take control of Raz as he leaps acrobatically through the air, traversing tightropes and trapezes in a varied, challenging, and joyful platforming experience. Psychonauts 2 also looks incredible on Xbox Series X, with a level of detail rarely seen in platforming games. If you missed out on the original Psychonauts, or have been a fan for the last 16 years, you will not be disappointed with this incredible sequel. It's weird, it's wonderful and it is side-splittingly hilarious.

HITMAN 3

Agent 47 returns as a ruthless professional in HITMAN 3 for the most important contracts of his entire career. Embark on an intimate journey of darkness and hope in the dramatic conclusion to the World of Assassination trilogy. Death awaits. Experience a globetrotting adventure and visit exotic locations that are meticulously detailed and packed full of creative opportunities. IOI's award-winning Glacier technology powers HITMAN 3's tactile and immersive game world to offer unparalleled player choice and replayability. This series has become incredibly popular over the last few years and HITMAN 3 proved to be the best-selling game in the franchise. With its exotic locations ranging from a dance club just outside of Berlin to solving a murder mystery in the English countryside, HITMAN 3 hits all the right notes. If you ever wanted to be a stylish James Bond-like assassin, then Agent 47 and HITMAN 3 is the perfect game for you.

Ratchet & Clank: Rift Apart

This iconic series from developers Insomniac Games has come a long way since its debut on the PlayStation2 system back in 2002. With 17 games in the series over the last 19 years, one would expect that a new entry in the series would by now be long in the tooth and rather void of ideas. Fortunately for fans of the series that couldn't be further from the truth. Rift Apart is the brand new entry in the series and is a PlayStation 5 exclusive that not only lives up to the series' high standards but surpasses it with some fantastic new additions to the formula. In Rift Apart, a very familiar evil robotic emperor is intent on conquering cross-dimensional worlds, with Ratchet and Clank's own dimension next in his sights. You'll need to dust off the dynamic pair's outrageous weaponry and stop a dimensional collapse in its tracks. Ratchet & Clank: Rift Apart is a wonderful game and cannot be missed. The story is hilarious and quite emotional at times, plus the graphics will wow you around every corner. This is the perfect game to play by yourself or if you have kids as it offers that unique mix of challenge and wonderful storytelling that all ages can enjoy.

MLB The Show 21

MLB The Show 21 comes packed with brand new features that look to improve on an already amazing game. Road to the Show, the game's magnificent career mode, has seen massive improvements as well as the ability to take your created player and use them in other game modes. This has been a fan request for many years and the ability to take the player you spent months and months upgrading into other game modes is a very welcome addition. Franchise mode which sees you as the General Manager of your favorite ball club has also seen major improvements that now empowers you to make better decisions on the future of your club. New to MLB The Show this year is gameplay styles alongside new gameplay onboarding tutorials to expand gameplay for all playstyles and skill levels. You don't have to be a pro to play like a pro. All the changes and additions might not seem like a big deal on paper, but when seeing it in action it all comes together to deliver the ultimate baseball experience. If you've always been an Xbox gamer who wanted to experience the magic of the MLB The Show series then this is the perfect jumping-in point and if you have been a fan of the series for years, the numerous changes and additions to The Show 21 is more than enough to justify the jump from last year's release.

F1 2021

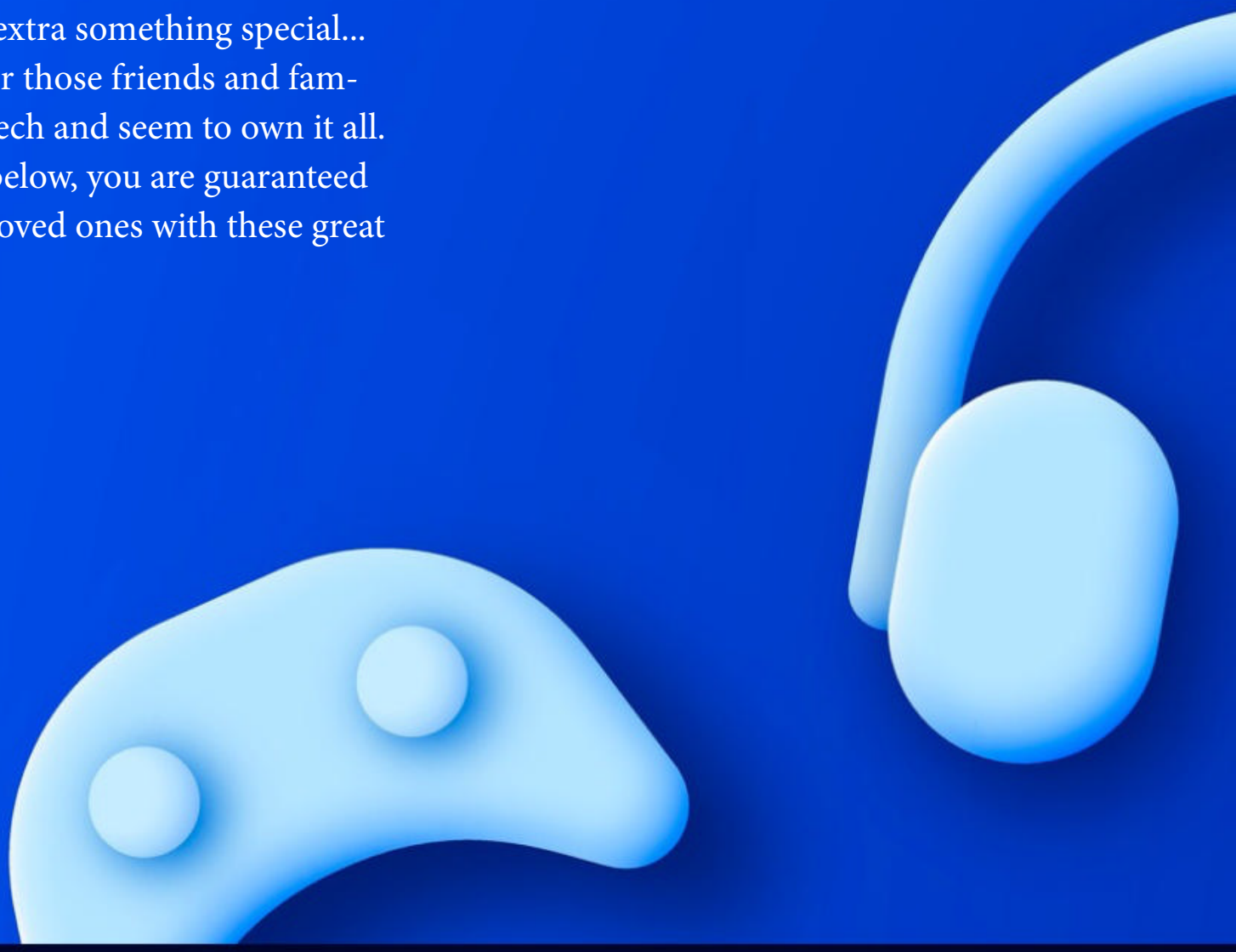
With the official F1 season already underway and the competition between Verstappen and Hamilton reaching fever pitch, Codemasters couldn't have picked a better time to release their yearly F1 game. But has the newly EA acquired studio given fans enough of a reason to upgrade to F1 2021 or will the latest offering be a Mazepin-like spin-off the tracks? The biggest addition to this year's game is the all-new story mode, a wonderful introduction to the drama and intrigue of the world of F1. Although never quite living up to the real-life drama seen in Netflix Drive to Survive series, the new story mode does a great job of adding in extra flavor to the racing series. On the track, the sense of speed and danger is immense and they were able to translate that perfectly to the game. Previous F1 games felt slow and didn't quite highlight the intense speeds these cars can reach. Fortunately, F1 2021 rectifies it and brings you even close to the danger these drivers face. The handling model is brilliantly flexible; whether you're new to F1 or are prepared for full simulation, you can fine-tune the game to suit you, more so here than in any previous iteration. Overall F1 2021 is a fantastic racing game for any F1 fan, with a fantastic handling model and some truly tense races. The visual might still be on par with the previous year's game, but the tense racing and added story mode makes F1 2021 an essential purchase for any racing fan.

2022

YEAR OF TECH

6 BEST GADGETS OUT NOW!

It's never too late to get that extra something special... especially if it's for yourself or those friends and family members that love their tech and seem to own it all. However, thanks to our list below, you are guaranteed to surprise your tech-savvy loved ones with these great tech gift ideas ever!



Petcube Cam

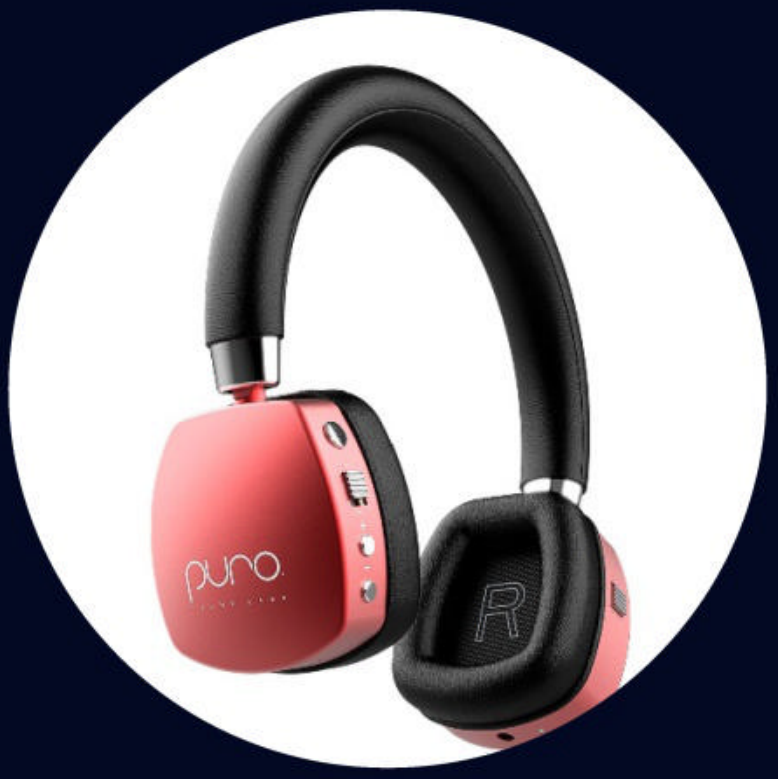
We all have that family member that loves their dogs more than they do you, and the Petcube Cam is the perfect gift for them to constantly check in with their real loved ones over Christmas dinner. This smart pet camera features a 1080p camera with 30-feet night vision. With a 8 x zoom and 110° wide-angle view, you can see every angle clearly, making sure your furry family friend is safe and sound. And if you miss your dog's wonder bark, this pint-sized camera also features smooth 2-way audio and is compatible with Alexa. The Petcube Cam is incredibly easy to set up, so even elderly family members won't have any issues setting this up in less than a minute. It also comes with an optional subscription service, Petcube Care, that allows you to replay up to 90 days of activity and save the best moments. This is without a doubt one of the best smart pet cameras on the market and a must-have for any pet lover.

Jall Sunrise Alarm Clock

Getting up in the morning is a real pain for some, and waking up to your super annoying iPhone alarm is not how you want to start your day. That's why you need to get the Sunrise Alarm Clock. This wonderful alarm recreates the sun rising, allowing you to wake up more naturally. Sunrise simulation light with 7 natural sounds will be on gradually from 10% brightness to 100% by 30 minutes before alarm setting time. If you think 30 minutes is too long, you can set the process to 20 minutes or 10 minutes. Wake you up by nature. The Sunrise Alarm Clock features a 7 color changing light including blue, indigo, purple, red, orange, yellow, green as well as a 3 level LED time display brightness & 20 level lighting brightness. Get rid of that ear-shattering phone alarm and move over to a more natural way of waking up.

Yootech wireless charger

As much as phone companies claim that their new iteration of the phone has the best battery life, getting through a day with any phone these days is nearly impossible. So it's vital that you always have a backup charger on standby, and one of the best wireless chargers is without a doubt the Yootech wireless charger. Not only is it super affordable, but it charges practically any phone that is Qi-enabled. Designed with two coils offering you a much wider charging area than the general round wireless charging pad while removing the hassle of trying to find the "Sweet Spot". It can charge your phone in any orientation, vertically or horizontally with a perfect angle for your eyes, you can watch movies, listen to music, make calls or send messages without interruption during the whole charging process. An essential purchase for any phone power user.



Puro Labs PuroQuiet Kids' Headphones

Kids these days are always on their phones or tablets, so a solid pair of kid-friendly headphones are essential. Younger kids especially are easily susceptible to exercise noises and can easily damage their hearing without the correct headphones. Fortunately, the PuroQuiet Kids' headphones are perfect for your youngsters. Featuring Active Noise Cancelling that can put the world on mute so that kids can listen clearly in loud environments without the need to increase the volume beyond safe sound listening levels. These headphones make daily noise and background sound up to 22 dB quieter, complemented by 78% noise isolation. A limited volume of 85 dB is the maximum safe sound listening level as recommended by many organizations. Intelligent digital signal processing imperceptibly limits the volume so that listeners don't even notice. These are the perfect lightweight headphones for boys, girls, and teens.

Nintendo Switch OLED

The Nintendo Switch has proven to be a massive success, with millions sold worldwide. And with the limited supplies of PS5 and Series X consoles, the Switch still remains a very attractive gift for any gamer. Now with the release of the Switch OLED, you can experience your favorite Nintendo games on a gloriously vivid 7inch OLED screen, a considerable upgrade over the initial Switch release. With a much-improved battery life, a reworked stand at the back, the Switch OLED model is a worthwhile upgrade over your current Switch or a perfect gift for the loved one that doesn't have one yet. With its flexibility as a mobile gaming device, the Switch is the perfect answer for those long trips to see family this Christmas.

Sonos Arc

Over recent years, soundbars have become essential for any living room to truly capture that cinema sound when watching your favorite movies on your big 4K TV. Although there are numerous choices in the soundbar market, the Sonos Arc is still one of the best in the business. The Sonos Arc brings all your entertainment to life with the inclusion of Dolby Atmos and its life-changing 3D sound experience. With eleven high-performance drivers that deliver crisp highs, dynamic midranges, and powerful bass, this slim profile-designed soundbar can be discreetly mounted anywhere in your living room. And if grandpa is struggling to hear the dialogue in his favorite Christmas movie, the Sonos Arc features Speech enhancement, a setting that clarifies dialogue when characters talk quietly on when the action intensifies. It's a wonderful soundbar that, although quite expensive, is the perfect addition to any home cinema or living room.

BOSE

LONG LIVE THE *King!*

All hail Lewis Hamilton

The art of Formula One has been admired by millions throughout the decades, from the first-ever race in 1950 right up to the current 2021 season. In those 71 years of racing, we have seen some of the greatest drivers ever to get behind the wheel, the Argentinian Juan Manuel Fangio, famously known as El Chueca, the genius and tragedy that was Ayrton Senna and the ruthlessness of Michael Schumacher. Yet one of the greatest drivers ever to grace the sport is currently still racing, the 7 times world champion and multiple record-breaker Lewis Hamilton. So how did the first-ever black Formula One driver become arguably the greatest driver of all time and what is the secret to his success?

A Man On A Mission

Lewis Carl Davidson Hamilton was born on 7 January 1985 in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, England to Anthony and Carmen. At the tender age of two, Hamilton's parents divorced, forcing him to spend his formative years with his mother and older half-sisters, Samantha and Nicola, until he was twelve. It was then that Hamilton would spend the rest of his childhood with his father and half-brother Nicolas. Hamilton would be educated at The John Henry Newman School, a voluntary aided Catholic secondary school in Stevenage. He was an avid soccer and cricket fan, competing in for various teams while at school. However, it would be at the age of five, when his father gave him a radio-controlled racing car, where a young Lewis Hamilton discovered his true love, racing. It turned out that the young Hamilton had a surreal knack for racing, as he would go on to finish second in the national BRCA championships the following year, a competition mostly featuring adults. His father noticed that his son was passionate about racing and then at the age of six bought the young Hamilton his first-ever go-kart for Christmas, with the promise that if his son worked hard and stayed focused on racing that he would do anything in his power to support his career.

Both Hamilton's kept their promise and the young Lewis' first taste of success came at Rye House, an unassuming little go-kart track hidden away in Hertfordshire. It was there Hamilton went aged eight, with his father Anthony and a second-hand kart, and took his first step on to the motorsport ladder. He immediately stood out, not only as an incredibly talented racer but unfortunately also due to the color of his skin. Motorsport in England was dominated by well-off white people, and a young black child with a second-hand go-kart stood out. Hamilton's family was neither wealthy nor white. His father lived in a council house in Stevenage and worked in IT for the railways. He took on extra jobs to supplement his income to find the money to support Lewis's racing - selling double glazing, washing dishes, putting up 'for sale' boards for estate agents, and so on. He once recalled to the BBC, "I had to buy a trailer to put the go-kart on and spare tires, this, that and the other, the credit cards were all maxed out." Yet the elderly Hamilton kept the promise he made his young son and did everything in his power to support the young child's passion. However, money was not the only challenge they faced. Racism is reared its ugly head numerous times as the Hamilton's were usually the only black people trackside.

Racism to Records

Sadly, a very young Hamilton quickly learned that the world is not a fair place, filled with small-minded people who still had the nerve to pick on a young child because of the color of his skin. "The first time it happened," a young Hamilton told the BBC at the time, "I felt really upset and told my mum and dad. I felt like I needed to get revenge, but lately, if anyone says anything to me, I just ignore them and get them back on the track." And getting back at them was exactly what the young future world champion did. At the age of ten, he would become the youngest-ever winner of the British cadet kart championship. It would be the same year that Hamilton would proudly walk up to the big boss of McLaren, Ron Dennis, and proudly proclaimed that "one day he will be racing in his cars". Another promise Hamilton would keep. Three years later, and Hamilton would win his second British kart championship at which point Ron Dennis himself signed Hamilton up to the McLaren's drivers development program, with Martin Whitmarsh overseeing the development of one of the most exciting British racing talents in years.

It would not be long before McLaren and Ron Dennis' faith in Hamilton was rewarded. Hamilton won the UK Formula Renault Championship in 2003, and after finishing fourth in the Formula 3 Euroseries the following year. Hamilton and his father both held the belief that he was ready to make the leap up to GP2, the final stage before the illustrious F1, yet Whitmarsh strongly disagreed with them. He thought Hamilton would learn more by staying in F3 and dominating the championship in 2005.

"We had a huge row," Whitmarsh recalled to the BBC. "I was accused of ruining his career by holding him back in F3. By that time, Lewis was getting a bit of traction and his father felt there were other options. In the end, I took the contract out and tore it up. "I freed them. I said, 'I don't want you here under duress. We want to work with you. This is what I really want you to do. If you don't want to do it...'. In hindsight this was a massive risk for Whitmarsh, he could easily have been known as the man from McLaren that let the greatest race driver ever walk away. Fortunately for Whitmarsh, his gamble paid off and six weeks later the Hamilton's returned and signed a new contract. Now with contract talks out of the way, a focused Hamilton did exactly what Whitmarsh knew he would dominate the European F3. The next year he would get his wish to move to GP2 and taking his F3 experience with him drove one of the most impressive seasons the championship had ever seen. The world of Formula One took notice and it would not be too long before the incredibly talented Hamilton would get his first chance of impressing for the F1 teams.

Fast forward eight years later and Hamilton would get his first stab at impressing in a F1 car. At Silverstone, in September 2006, a 21-year-old Hamilton was given an evaluation test by McLaren as the team pondered his promotion to F1 the following year. McLaren's then

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race driver Pedro de la Rosa was there as a benchmark. The engineers preparing the car knew Hamilton had talent but like most new drivers to F!, they expected him to struggle to adjust to the demands of an F1 car. After a couple of familiarization runs, Hamilton immediately matched De la Rosa's times. The test team reported back to the factory that Hamilton was incredible, and before long his place in the team for 2007, as team-mate to double world champion Fernando Alonso, was confirmed. It was, says Martin Whitmarsh, McLaren's chief executive officer at the time, "one of the easier decisions".

What followed was at the time, one of the most impressive debut seasons ever. The F1 rookie matched his far more experienced co-driver all throughout the season and was unlucky not to go on and win the World Drivers Championship in his first season. Personal issues between himself and Alonso reared its ugly head a few times, with the Spaniard clearly rattled that he was being pushed to the limit by the rookie. However, the next season, Hamilton would go one step further and become the then youngest champion and first-ever champion of color in F1 history. He would go on to have great success with McLaren and even the dominance of Red Bull and the young Sebastian Vettel could not stop Hamilton from rising to the top. After four years of dominance from the German and Red Bull team, eyebrows were raised when Hamilton announced that he would leave McLaren and join the much less fancied Mercedes team. It was a massive gamble for the talented Hamilton but one that would pay off big time. In 2014, McLaren's performance deteriorated rapidly, while the up-and-coming Mercedes team flourished under the new regulations that came in that year. Hamilton and his new Mercedes team went on to break the stranglehold Red Bull and Vettel had, going on the claim his second World Drivers Championship title that season. It would become of the most successful partnerships in F1 history, with Hamilton and the Mercedes team winning the next five out of six titles, with only teammate Nico Rosberg stopping Hamilton from lifting the title in 2016. Hamilton would go on to break nearly every record, form the most pole positions to most victories ever, cementing himself as one of the greatest F1 race drivers ever to grace the sport. At the time of writing, Hamilton is involved in a fierce battle with Dutch rival Max Verstappen, the only man standing in the way of the biggest record yet, Hamilton becoming the first-ever driver to win the WDC title eight times.

Regardless if he was able to pip Verstappen to the title in 2021, Hamilton will always be seen as one of the greatest of all time. A man that has broken the racial barrier of motorsport racing, a man that has broken nearly every record that stood in front of him, and a man that has proven that background and skin color has nothing to do with pure talent. From a young child having to endure racist taunts and abuse from adults to a teen that broke the rules and set new standards in racing to the adult that has become the greatest race driver of all time, Lewis Hamilton will forever be remembered as the man that broke the boundaries of motorsport racing and has set the scene for numerous children of color to follow in his footsteps and set new records where once believed unattainable. And it is for that fact alone, that Lewis Hamilton will be seen as the greatest of all time.

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FOR RICHER OR POORER

5 power couple tips for business

Husband and wife duos are taking over the business world and here are some tips on how to make it work.
Who can you trust more than anyone?! Hopefully, it's your partner you are married to! And with trust and common goals comes a refreshing platform to create and run companies. And that is why countless couples during the pandemic have quit their jobs and teamed up with their loved ones to create businesses that are not only unique but make a lot of money.

Such is the case for Chuckie and Shelby Gregory, who started a company about fun morning cocktails to jump-start your day, and have scaled it into the millions TOGETHER!

So what tips do they have for other couples going into work together? We asked them!

Why should more husbands and wives (or partners in life) team up and create businesses together? For us, it is essential. When you start a brand like this you must go all in to have it be successful. And most entrepreneurs will tell you that it's hard to think about anything else. So, with both of us in it and always on the same page it makes it much easier to talk about the brand and brainstorm. It makes entrepreneurship a lot less lonely and a lot more fun!

What do you do when you get on each other's nerves? Who wins the fights usually? It doesn't happen too often, but when we do get on each other's nerves we usually take a small break from working to reset our minds and cool down. Going outside to relax for a minute or just hanging out and having a snack helps to take a mental break and realize it really wasn't a big deal to begin with. I (Shelby) always win the fights! Just kidding. But really, we always try to come to a compromise, or we just say that was stupid to argue about and let it go as quickly as we can. We get the best out of our business when we work together, so being able to move on from an argument quickly is definitely key to staying productive.

What is the first thing you each do every morning as part of your routines? We both drink our EarlyBird Morning Cocktail! Sounds silly since we are the ones who made it, but this is why we made it! We wanted to create a product that would be beneficial for us and make our mornings easier. It has

helped me (Shelby) the most because I was never a morning person before. I always dreaded when the alarm would go off and would start my days being grumpy, which was never fun for either one of us. The EarlyBird Morning Cocktail helps to make waking up early easy with clean energy, a boost of hydration, and motivation, all before turning off your alarm!

Why is waking up early important? Waking up early is important for many reasons! The main benefit of waking up early is the alone time. While everyone is asleep, either at home and/or from work, you can have time to yourself without disruptions. No emails coming in, no calls, no meetings to attend, no kids screaming around the house; whatever it may be. This is important! You will have time to focus on whatever your main goal is for that day. Some will take this time to work out, read, or meditate. Others will take this time to write a paper or finish a harder task that has taken them longer to complete. Your brain has the most willpower in the mornings, so waking up early and taking advantage of that will help lead you to success!

How important is social media to the success of your company? Social media is very important to the success of EarlyBird! Mostly, because we can use all of the platforms to advertise our products on. This helps us to reach as big of an audience as we want, which is very beneficial for an online-only business.

We also encourage all of our customers to share their stories and pictures with us on social media. This has created an entire community around everyone becoming an EarlyBird. This community inspired us to start a Facebook group for our customers only so they could all share their stories, tips, and tricks with each other and motivate each other every day! We love our little club of members, and they love it too. We let them in on new things coming before anyone else, so they feel special too.

Creating this community and advertising on all platforms has helped our business grow tremendously.

Tell us the 5 quick tips for success that any young business owner should know? #1- Action trumps smarts and everything else. We call it simply "getting sh*t done". Successful entrepreneurs are rarely the smartest people in the room. They're simply the people that are stubborn enough to keep going.
#2- Avoid shiny object syndrome. We've been easily caught up in "the next big thing" too many times. It's especially easy in the fast-moving world of e-commerce. But it's extremely important to stick to the fundamentals. And focus on the 20% of activities that produced the results.
#3- Focus on the back end. Many new businesses are obsessed with getting new customers that they forget to continue selling to existing customers. And selling to existing customers is really where all the profit is made.
#4- Own as much data as possible. Ads are only getting more expensive. It's becoming increasingly important to own the data. Email addresses, phone numbers, physical addresses, etc. Our biggest days are our new product releases that we launch to our owned lists. These launches would be insignificant if we didn't have the owned lists. This is the biggest limitation to amazon. Use those 3rd party platforms as additional revenue and not your bread and butter.
#5- This may be the most important

one. Don't have a transactional business where you simply sell a product and then disappear. Create a community. Create diehards. Our goal is to convert 10% of our customers into diehards. Which in turn creates an unstoppable force of word-of-mouth and brand ambassadors.

Will waking up early and getting sh*t done help people in their love lives too? I believe so! When you wake up early and get sh*t done, you start to build a lot more confidence in yourself. When you believe in yourself and love yourself, you can begin to love others and it will attract others towards you.

Also, being more productive throughout your day will give you more time to spend on your love life in the evening. Some may end up canceling plans or rushing through dinner because they don't have the time or still need to get more things done. But if you wake up early and get sh*t done right away, you should be done with your tasks earlier and have more time to spend with loved ones.

Anything else fun you'd like to add or include for our readers? If you have been thinking about starting your own business or thinking of a product you want to create, just do it! The time is now. So many people do not believe in themselves or have others telling them that they could never do this or that, so they give up and never try. Imagine what we would've missed out on if we never took a risk and tried to start our own business! I would have no clue where I would be, but I for sure wouldn't be my own boss right now. You just have to do what you're passionate about and don't look back! Get out of your comfort zone and get sh*t done!

Sensual Therapy

Amy Taylor

Model | @Amytaylorla

Photographer Julia Mindar | @JuliaMindarPhoto
Wardrobe @DanielAlamillo_
HMUA @MelissaWonder_
Location @OCMansion
PR LSA Publications | @leo.alderman | @lsapublications

DIXIE CHICKS

ROCK-OLA

Such an absolute honor to have you on FHM! What are your plans this year? Being on the covers of three major magazines, and showing you guys the awesome photo and video shoots we did to produce the content in those issues. Traveling to several countries to which I've never been. Doing more skiing, SCUBA diving, seeing friends and family, trying to stay healthy and happy, and most of all, more quality snuggle time with the main guy in my life, my 6-pound dog.

What is at the top of your list to achieve in 2022? Greater peace. Which means being offline a little more, to the degree possible. Especially off social media. I'll still be posting my work (enjoy the content, friends!), but I think I'm going to post less about my personal life and read less about the lives of others, and instead spend more time actually living. I'd like to return to my phone being a bit more of a tool with which to accomplish tasks, and a bit less of what's starting to feel like a distraction ARY all-encompassing extra appendage of my body, LOL.

Top 3 best moments of your career? 1. Being on the cover of FHM in the USA. 2. Being featured in Sports Illustrated. 3. Being well over 40 and having a healthier modeling career than ever.

What would you say makes you stand out in the industry? I don't think I'm superior to anyone else, and I believe everyone's unique. However, I suspect there aren't too many models who are also commercially licensed pilots, MBAs and MENSA members, as I am. That said, I'm quite sure every other model has characteristics and accomplishments that I don't...there are many great models. I'm in good company!

Where are we most likely to find you If not Infront of the camera being glamorous? In winter, traveling to various ski destinations to enjoy the slopes. In summer, traveling to tropical islands worldwide to SCUBA dive. During the holidays, in California near family. The rest of the time? Either in Los Angeles at home, or wherever strikes my fancy... I'm a bit of a wanderer when I have the time and inclination. The world is beautiful... I intend to see as much of it as possible before my time's over.

What are some of your favorite outdoor activities? Marksmanship, aviation, SCUBA, skiing, golf, tennis, polo, surfing, paddle boarding, boating, and whenever yoga's outdoor!

3 ultimate deal-breakers when it comes to men? Sloth, cruelty, and mercuriality. Be lazy, be mean, and/or be kooky, and I'm gone.

Never have I ever...? Had sex with two men at the same time. Yet.

Top 3 myth busters when it comes to models? That we're stupid, that we all have eating disorders, and that we all necessarily like all that makeup and primping on our off days.

What is the wrong way to approach you as an admirer? Asking for sex too soon. I am unattracted to players and/or men who are inelegant. Be loyal, choosy, and well-mannered... just like I am. Class is sexy. Vulgarity isn't.

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? Instagram or YouTube: @AmyTaylorLA TikTok: @AmyTaylorCA Twitter: @AmyTaylor1 Facebook: @AmyTaylorInLA.

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? Get off that little lighted square and get outside...real life's waiting. Oh, and I love y'all. xoxo

Jack the Ripper

Why do we kill for intrigue?

By Ian Kirke | Twitter @ianjkirke

The cold evening chill against my face only added to my already heightened sense of anticipation. Slayings, subterfuge, and the sinister story of London's first recorded serial killer was only moments away. How was I so certain? This was at least my fifth walking tour of the killing grounds of Jack the Ripper.

Standing on the pavement awaiting the guide, Aldgate High Street bustled with activity. I looked across the road, back towards The Hoop and Grapes where I had earlier enjoyed a pint after discovering that this ancient drinking den, built in 1593, had been the only pub to survive the great fire of 1666. The old and the new fused together often effortlessly, yet occasionally awkwardly too, typified no more than by a seemingly modern office block hosting a huge illuminated sign that simply proclaimed, "White Chapel." The killer had been referred to as the Whitechapel murderer prior to the media frenzy following the publication of the infamous "Dear Boss" letter, received by the Central News Agency of London on 27th September 1888, and latterly the "From Hell" correspondence. Sent to George Lusk, chair of the Whitechapel Vigilance Committee on 15th October 1888, this letter was accompanied by half a human liver.

As I awaited the arrival of my guide I became frustrated. He was late. I called the tour number only to discover that the error was mine and I was an hour early. Was this a lack of attention to detail on my part or further evidence of how this story had gripped me? To kill some time I had another beer in the nearby East India Arms, built next to the once goliath of overseas trading, the East India Company. The intimacy of most of the East End boozers I had previously frequented was elegantly reflected in this example. Cramped, yet with small booths that allowed a degree of privacy, no doubt enabling yesteryear traders to seal the deal, and nowadays, adulterers and fraudsters to fashion their crimes. Or alternatively space for reflection. I decided that following this tour, I would set myself three targets: identify why I had been compelled to tread this route so often; what could I discover about the early lives of the victims – simply labeling them all as prostitutes was a gross injustice; and as an ex-cop, identify my prime suspect.
As I delved into the scientific descriptors of human curiosity I was surprised by the conclusion of Celeste Kidd and Benjamin Hayden of the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences and Center for Visual Science, University of Rochester, New York, "Curiosity is a basic element of our cognition, but its biological function, mechanisms, and neural underpinning remain poorly understood."

Would the answer to my first issue elude me? Nonetheless, and with my criminal justice pedigree supporting my personal quest, I continued my investigation.

Psychologist Daniel Berlyne is perhaps one of the most important contemporary contributors to a consensus on curiosity, describing it as the driving force behind the human desire to explore. No wonder the words of Captain Jean-Luc Picard of the Starship Enterprise (Star Trek: The Next Generation) held such personal reverence, "To boldly go where no one has gone before." But this synopsis still left me wanting to know more. I had trodden this particular London terrain on several occasions and had explored every conceivable conspiracy theory. What kept me coming back for more? Then Goldilocks provided a hint. Not the character in the classic fairy tale, created by the English author Robert Southey, but the psychological principle. In essence, we are attracted to situations holding just about the right level of challenge for the moment we are in. Like Goldilocks, who after tasting three bowls of porridge chooses the one that is not too hot, nor too cold, but just about the right temperature. The theory, according to author Laura Grace Weldon, is, "Something that sparks your interest and holds it close to the edge of your abilities, encouraging you to push yourself to greater mastery. That's the principle used to hold the player's attention in video games. That's what inspires artists, musicians, and athletes to ever greater accomplishments." Laura had nailed it – I was captivated by the story but needed to reach a better understanding. In other words, of the hundred or so suspects mooted by Ripperologists ever since the last murder of Mary Jane Kelly on 9th November 1888, it was necessary for me to pronounce my verdict. My final personal objective would, hopefully, provide some assurance on this matter, yet my second goal had primacy. As with many other notorious criminals, the Ripper's victims routinely remained anonymous. Statistics. Footnotes. Afterthoughts. All five victims were at one time optimistic, spirited, and ambitious. All enjoyed loving relationships, and some had children. Whatever their final circumstances none deserved the brutality inflicted upon them by the cowardly murderers – the plural is deliberate since I believe Jack the Ripper had an accomplice, but more of that later.
"The Five" by Hallie Rubenhold, a most incredibly written book, is a compassionate and comprehensive account of the untold lives of the women killed by Jack the Ripper. Furthermore, it paints an uncompromising and chillingly accurate landscape of Victorian Britain that arguably had its most catastrophic epicenter in London's East End. During the Ripper's reign of terror, Whitechapel – about the size of two hundred football pitches – was home to a quarter of a million people living in the most appalling and squalid conditions.

Sanitation didn't exist and raw human sewage mixed with animal waste on the only playgrounds of the children of the poorest, where it was commonplace for two families to share

one cramped room. Only half of the Whitechapel youngsters would reach the age of five. Of those that survived, life expectancy was, at best, mid-forties. The murder rate often peaked to around twenty a night, fuelled by the lucrative trade in body parts facilitated by local unscrupulous pub landlords, including the proprietor of The Ten Bells. Around eighty percent of the women were prostitutes and many of their clients traveled from the more affluent West End.

Mary Walker was born on 26th August 1845, on a day described as fine and dry. Her home was less so, a decrepit 200-year-old building called Dawes Court, on Gunpowder Ally, Shoe Lane. I didn't need to close my eyes to imagine her torrid start to life. Yet her loving parents Edward, a blacksmith in nearby Lambeth, and Caroline created a humble but stable life, along with siblings Frederick and Edward junior. Mary, affectionally known as Polly, went to School and unusually for her gender and class was allowed to stay in education until age fifteen, largely due to her father's supportive influence. During this period, it was usual to teach reading but not writing, although Polly became fluent in both. Never straying far from her dad, she married 19-year-old William Nichols, a warehouseman. They had five children and later resided in the rather splendidly named, and eminently more comfortable, Peabody Buildings on Stamford Street. Her life began a spiral of despair when the marriage failed, and she and William divorced following his affair with a near neighbor and friend of Polly. Turning to drink, her mental health deteriorated rapidly. Constantly arguing with her once adoring father, he kicked her out of his home, and with nowhere to live or means of support she turned to prostitution. She was murdered on 31st August 1888, aged forty-three.

Eliza Ann Smith was born, it is believed, on 25th September 1840. Having been born outside of wedlock to dad and soldier George and mum Ruth, documentation is sparse. Her mother would have faced a momentous change in fortunes, losing her employment and being dependent upon paltry and erratic handouts from George. Society was even less compassionate, labeling her and those of similar circumstances "dollymops." Whilst not representing a working prostitute, Ruth was nonetheless considered an amateur courtesan. Fortunately, two years later George was given permission to marry his lover, and mother of four more children. Designated married quarters were not provided until the 1850s and newlyweds had to occupy screened-off areas of the communal barracks. Military service dictated that the family moved between

London and Berkshire. Eliza, more frequently called Annie, commenced her education, funded by the Army. Regimental schools instilled a sense of discipline and duty to the monarch, and promoted the earnest held belief that this provision would endow children with, "the means of making themselves useful and earning a livelihood." She latterly became a domestic servant, although her other tag was less endearing. According to her brother Fountain she "first took a drink when she was quite young." Nonetheless, she matured into a doting mother of three after marrying John James Chapman on 1st May 1869. When her eldest daughter Emily Ruth died of meningitis aged twelve on her brother John's second birthday the harrowing trauma turned Annie back to alcohol to lessen the enduring pain. Her marriage and home life crumbled. Suffering from tuberculosis she left home and turned to prostitution and flower selling. She was murdered on 8th September 1888, aged forty-seven.

Elisabeth Gustafsdotter was born on the 27th of November 1843 in Torslanda, about nine miles west of Gothenburg, Sweden to proud parents Gustaf and Beata. The second of four children she enjoyed a comfortable rural upbringing. Each local parish contained a common school with a limited syllabus, essentially writing and arithmetic. Religious study complemented the former, and Lutherans Bible classes were essential alongside learning the tenets of the faith contained within the Book of Concord. A month before her seventeenth birthday she left home for Gothenburg to seek employment in domestic service, a traditional route for many young Swedish provincial women, also providing an opportunity to earn a dowry. According to residency records, in February 1861 she was a maidservant to the family of Lars Fredrick Olsson. Three years later her service with the family came to an abrupt end. Records remain vague save the fact that she relocated to nearby Domkyrko where the local clerk recorded her occupation as a servant but, somewhat surprisingly, omitted her address. This may be evidence of an uncertain future, with speculation existing that she had become subject to the coercive influence of another. Later police records show that she was arrested for prostitution. In February 1866 Elisabeth emigrated to London, telling friends two conflicting stories – to work as a domestic servant for an unnamed gentleman who lived near Hyde Park, or to stay with relatives. It is presumed that she funded this trip with a sixty-five Krona inheritance following the death of her mother in 1864. On 7th March 1869, she married carpenter John Thomas Stride, residing in East India Dock Road and running a coffee shop in Poplar. The couple had no children, and their relationship began to fail in 1874. Documents show that she was admitted to the Poplar workhouse in March 1877, although later census records indicate that the couple reunited

46 DONOVAN BROS 46
The noted house for PAPER BAGS
FLORISTS' PACKING TISSUE.
GREASEPROOFS & COURED PAPERS
PRICE TICKETS
PRINTED BAGS & CARRIERS TO ORDER
STRONG CARRIER BAGS
45 NHA-MOR 84
Thai street food & noodle bar

THIS MARKET
was finished rebuilding
by R. HORNER 1893
LAMB STREET E1

in 1881, living in Bow. On 24th October 1884, John died of tuberculosis. Elisabeth then embarked on a string of erratic relationships, typified by the turbulent partnership with laborer Michael Kidney. In addition to sporadic domestic work, she returned to prostitution. She was murdered on 29th September 1888, aged forty-four.

Catherine, Kate or 'Chick,' Eddowes was born on 14th April 1842 in Wolverhampton to parents George and Catherine, the sixth of twelve children. Two months after her birth her family boarded an overcrowded canal barge and made the grueling journey to London. George, a tinplate worker, had been forced to relocate due to the mechanization of his trade. Obtaining work with Perkins and Sharpus in Bell Court as a skilled mechanic the family took residence in Baden Place, Bermondsey. Opportunity shone upon Kate who was educated at Dowgate, a charity-funded school that possessed a degree of prestige since, at times, it had a waiting list. The purpose of the school was to support working-class children to become a dignified and obedient labor force by applying the principles of Christianity. A formidable caste system existed within Victorian England and the dutiful workforce would be shaped from cradle to grave. Kate's mother died on 17th November 1855, two years before the death of her father, resulting in fifteen-year-old Kate and three of her siblings being admitted to the local workhouse. Having subsequently secured work as a tinplate stamper she was made redundant, possibly as a result of stealing from her employer. Kate later entered into a relationship with former soldier Thomas Conway and mothered three children. Although there is no documentary evidence to confirm marriage, she began to refer to herself as Kate Conway and tattooed herself on her left forearm with the initials 'TC.' Around 1873, after the birth of her youngest son, the relationship began to falter, and Kate began to drink, something her teetotal husband abhorred. Domestic violence became rife, and she would often be seen with black eyes and bruising. In 1880 Kate left Conway and her two children (the eldest having already left) and started a relationship with John Kelly whom she met when they stayed at the same lodging house. In 1881 she appeared before Thames Magistrates Court on a charge of being drunk and disorderly. She tended to earn money from domestic work and seasonal hop picking in Kent. It is thought she supplemented her often miserable wages with occasional prostitution in order to pay her rent. If that failed, she was often known to sleep rough. She was murdered on 30th September 1888, aged forty-six.

Mary Jane Kelly was an enigma. Her early life is somewhat hazy,

and she was the author of much of her own testimony, yet her obvious verve for life allows me to ignore any potential embellishments. She was a young vivacious, fiery Irish girl who according to her version of events was born in 1863 in Limerick, shortly after which her father John Kelly relocated the family to, perhaps, Carmarthen in Wales where he was employed in the ironworks. She claimed that her well-to-do family had subsequently disowned her.

From many accounts, she had an artistic flair and was a strikingly beautiful redhead. In 1879, aged about sixteen, she married a coal miner who apparently died three years later in a pit explosion. This period of her life is shrouded in further mystery, only adding to the obvious and radiant charm of Mary, although it is suspected that she may have become a casual prostitute. In 1884 her whereabouts became more certain when she moved to London and worked in a tobacconist in Chelsea before entering domestic service in Spitalfields. Those in top hats seeking high-class pleasures of the flesh, as opposed to a knee-trembler against a wall in the less affluent areas of London, were drawn to the West End. This is where Mary landed, in an elite brothel. Establishing herself as one of the most popular girls she dressed in expensive clothing and hired carriages to transport her across the metropolis. Legend has it that wealthy client Francis Craig persuaded her to live with him in France where she adopted the name, Marie Jeanette. A fortnight later the enigmatic Mary was back in London. Her glitzy lifestyle began to wane, and she began to drink heavily and eventually found herself in the East End where she briefly lived with a man called Morganstone close to the Commercial Gas Works in Stepney. Latterly, and according to her then neighbor Lizzie Albrook, Mary became depressed and yearned to return to Ireland. She was often heard singing Irish songs when drunk. Due to her abuse of those around her she earned the nickname "Dark Mary." She was murdered on 9th November 1888 whilst inside her lodgings at 13 Millers Court, aged twenty-five.

On this particular tour, my guide was Paul Mansfield, a former London detective. As we completed the circuit he ushered our tour group into a discrete doorway. He then applied a logic that appealed to my criminal justice background. The victims knew of each other – proximity of residence, frequenting mutual ground, and sharing a common occupation. In addition, they shared intimate and extraordinary liaisons - in this case, sufficient for the need to be silenced. Today sex workers look out for each other and I have no doubt that this important camaraderie also existed then. As an ex-cop, Paul was aware that key evidence had gone missing and that certain aspects of this investigation remained off the public radar. This narrative hit a personal nerve and I knew instinctively that this was unlikely to be completely down to errant administration. It smacked of a potential whitewash. Reflecting the order by Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Charles Warren during the Ripper inquiry to wash away crime scene graffiti, and potentially crucial evidence, that read, "The Juwes are the men that will not be blamed for nothing." A highly educated and cunning primary offender may have intended to throw the pursuing cops off the scent by deception and confusion.

The murderer clearly had surgical skills and had in all of the murders, save that of Elisabeth Stride, mutilated the victims with a concentrated focus upon the reproductive organs. To achieve this level of butchery they needed time and an accomplice to act as a lookout. The human density of the killing fields coupled with the heightened police presence once the serial nature of offending had been established, meant that the offenders needed the ironclad immunity to come and go as they pleased. Royal carriages were afforded this unique protection. The striking allure of Mary was captivating. A highly sexual companion, of optimum childbearing age, who could have enchanted the very privileged elite.

In an article published in November 1970, Doctor Thomas Stowell, an octogenarian surgeon, recounted a discussion in his youth with Caroline Acland, the daughter of a royal physician who had treated a young man riddled with syphilis which had migrated to his brain. As unlikely as it had seemed on previous walks the connections began to forge. Motive and opportunity resonated as never before. Then Paul disclosed the clinching part of the jigsaw. The royal physician's illiterate coach driver, having been quizzed by police during the Ripper investigation, and choosing to be less than discrete, suddenly became silenced when, allegedly, a vital organ was surgically removed from him. The presumed identity of the syphilis-riddled patient? Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence, and Avondale, grandson of Queen Victoria. Since Mary was catholic the succession of a non-protestant offspring to the throne was inconceivable. My prime suspect? Sir William Gull, physician-in-ordinary to Queen Victoria.

But then, what do I know? This is only my verdict, although I have for the first time fully addressed my own intrigue and have finally laid to rest to my own satisfaction, a decades-long query. Having resolved my own curiosity will I embark on another Jack the Ripper tour? Maybe. But if I do when next in this part of London, I will look at it through a different lens, and not solely through the eyes of a killer.

PSYCHICS

IS THERE REALLY ANYBODY OUT THERE?

By Ian Kirke / @ianjkirke

When I was about eight years old my mum donned a large headscarf, equally enormous earrings, and looked into a crystal ball. I vividly remember this spectacle since she was performing a charade as a clairvoyant at the local school fete. It was a crude and rather comical caper, although people still paid to have their fortunes told. Later in life, I had my palms read on several occasions and mused over the general claptrap of a long, happy life with many children. In fairness as a broad statement, I guess this wasn't too far off the mark, other than the second element being occasionally torpedoed by grief. In a nutshell, I wasn't convinced about the possibility that any human being possesses the ability to communicate with the dead, let alone foresee the future. My mum had clearly demonstrated that a fair number of people enjoyed being duped and that it was no more than harmless fun.

Mainstream science echoed my obvious dismissal of this subject. I was still less convinced when I recalled my mum, dad, and uncle using a ouija board to successfully locate my grandma's lost kettle. Indeed, how does one even go about losing a kettle? Anyway, in a more robust challenge to the notion of supernatural powers the National Geographic Channel conducted a most compelling experiment in 2015. Four volunteers, supervised by paranormal expert Mark Edwards, were encouraged to reach out to the spiritual world via the same apparatus that had magically located the AWOL kettle. One participant began to map out a seemingly convincing dialogue with 'the other side.' When the process was repeated with blindfolds the messages became gobbledygook. It was evident that one of my parents, or possibly my shifty uncle, had hidden grandma's favorite utensil. It was all a load of nonsense, pure entertainment, and if some people were taken in by it then so what? It was hardly going to have any impact on my life. Then I encountered utter grief. Life-changing and all-consuming heartache which made me question my hitherto steadfast position.

In 2012 my wife Theresa was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Although a benign chordoma its location meant that she would have to undergo three complex and high-risk brain operations. Each time she went to the John Radcliffe hospital in Oxford to be operated upon by the truly incredible neurosurgeons her chances of survival were slim. On the last occasion, I remember our kids, my mum, and I being taken to the family room to be told to prepare for the worst.

Miraculously Theresa pulled through and looked forward to a period of rehabilitation and proton beam therapy in America. Returning home her
mobility was fragile and her immune system, shot to bits as a result of the intrusive treatment, was even more weak. A few weeks later she had a stroke which robbed her of her speech and movement of her limbs. Although a harrowing experience for my children who witnessed the event, we were all reassured that the recovery rates from this type of dramatic episode were nonetheless good. A short time later Theresa suffered a catastrophic stroke that left her in a total and unresponsive coma with no chance of survival. She was given twelve weeks to live but survived for nearly eighteen months in a specialist trauma suite where she received the most incredible care and comfort. When visiting her one day a nurse called me to one side and enquired if I had arranged her funeral. Until that moment I had always assumed that this event occurred after someone had died. I was scared, vulnerable, and faced my biggest ever fear – being without my soulmate.

One night I fell asleep and the most incredible thing happened. Theresa visited me. She held me tightly and said that I would be all right. I immediately felt unshackled from the fear of an uncertain future and awoke with her smell in my nostrils. I had experienced dreaming before, but this wasn't the same. I had never, nor have I ever since, felt such a connection. In early 2015 she died. Since this experience, Theresa's message has been proved to be impeccably correct. Over the years I decided to keep this intimate encounter a secret until the time was right to make sense of it. Had I experienced supernatural contact? And in doing so, had I been provided with a glimpse of my immediate future? After six years I felt ready to explore whether my views on the world of psychic phenomena still held true, or was there a more rational explanation? Indeed, would I ever be ready for a more scientific description?
Meeting psychic Debbie Davies for the first time instantly dismissed my prejudices that all such practitioners look like my mum at the school fete all those decades ago. Bright, vivacious, with a charming celebrity character, she welcomed the opportunity to be quizzed by a still somewhat dubious observer of her proclaimed talent.

So, what does a psychic do?

Debbie guided me through the psychic continuum – at the entry-level an ability to be thinking about a certain

person only for that very same individual to suddenly make contact, or humming a tune in their heads, only to turn on the radio and hear the same track. This made me think. Did I possess a little psychic skill or was my friendship circle so small that I could usually guess who it was?

And I had also experienced my imaginary appearance at Glastonbury singing my favorite Level 42 track coinciding with the exact same song as I turned on the radio. Weird! Admittedly I may have been overly optimistic given the thousands of times I had been banging out a Motorhead number in my head and not heard any of their music on Heart FM. Debbie continued: At the furthest end of the psychic range it becomes a more defined discipline. As she explained, "A true psychic will have the capacity to see and know. For example, sitting with someone or looking at a picture and knowing about their character without even talking to them." I underlined this statement several times as I was keen to test this assertion a little later on. Could Debbie detect any hidden parts of my psyche? But more of that later.

Asked during an interview by another journalist in early December 2019 what she predicted would be the next seismic global event Debbie was certain – the outbreak of a disease that would engulf the entire world. This authenticated disclosure made me pause, and I sipped my tea for what seemed an eternity. Not wishing to dribble too much, I regained my composure and recalled my favorite school subjects – mathematics and science. Probability can be calculated and the last and most significant pandemic pre-COVID-19 was the influenza contagion of 1918. Pandemics also have a habit of striking every hundred years or so. On the other hand, Debbie had been prepared to stake her professional reputation on an issue that most of us, let alone many Governments, had not put much thought into.

What was your journey?

Being vigorously pulled back by her mum as a toddler, via the reins that parents of a certain era felt compelled to imprison their offspring in, coincided with Debbie's first critical evaluation of life, "What's all this for?" she asked herself. At the same age, I was probably wondering if I should eat the yellow crayon next. Aged five, she promptly packed a case and told her mum that she wanted to go back to the life before she was born. Although the study of 'claimed past-life memories' has been the subject of academic research there is no escaping Debbie's utterly unique early home life.

Mum was a clairaudient – she could hear the voices of the dead but couldn't see them. For significant periods, up until eleven years of age, Debbie was left alone during the evenings as a consequence of the working patterns of her parents. During this time Debbie realized that she had an ability her mum didn't possess – she could see the dead as ghosts. Asking a schoolfriend why she couldn't see her dead grandad who was standing next to them, Debbie quickly learned that open ridicule would forever be an unwelcome retort.

If her early life hadn't chronicled enough spookiness, I was in for some more truly harrowing revelations. One day, aged eighteen and employed in a local retailer, she had felt uncannily depressed, returning home early in floods of tears. She instinctively knew that something awful was going to happen but blocked it out. Later that evening when out with friends she steadfastly refused the offer of a lift home with a couple of mates who had accompanied her and other pals to a local pub. Returning home later, a telephone call at her home confirmed that the same pair had been involved in a fatal accident. From that point, Debbie made a promise to herself that she would no longer fight her psychic ability.

As a mum, pregnant with her second child, she intuitively knew that something was critically wrong with her baby. Several times doctors reassured her that everything was as it should be. Debbie insisted that a more rigorous test take place following which she received the call that all parents dread, confirming her suspicions. Baby Andrew was stillborn having suffered from anencephaly. This explained the incessant visions she had where an old lady, later identified by her mum as Debbie's great grandmother, carried a small white coffin.

Displaying her, by now, trademark smile Debbie lifted the gloom by mentioning her other children who could never hide anything without mum finding out. A real bummer!

Her premonitions about the passing of her parents were both certain and, chillingly, opposed the often passionate and contrary views of those around her, including medical practitioners. Dad passed away in 2005 after suffering a catastrophic stroke but was there in spirit to meet his wife when she died three years later on the exact day Debbie had forecast.

Summing up her journey Debbie drew breath. "It's like living two lives that run parallel to each other. One as a wife, mum, friend – a normal life. And there is the other side." My resultant silence nudged her to continue. "The path is hard to travel simply because so many people do

not believe in life after death."

What do you say to those who believe it's no more than pseudo-science?
A triumphant call to maintain an open mind was Debbie's purposeful response to my pointed question. And I had to agree with her that the most powerful things in our lives are often invisible to the naked eye. On the practical side – electricity, soundwaves, and the seamless connectivity we rely on brought about by the power of the mysterious workings of the internet. On the emotional side, can you ever actually see love?

Why can't you give me the winning lottery numbers for next week?
Debbie explained the rules, and I sensed once again that my woeful attempts to undermine her had failed. Like any other human endeavor there were decrees. Democracies are underpinned by the rule of law. Contracts are governed by terms and conditions. Her gift addresses need and not greed.

Elegantly positioning life as a sum of our decisions coupled with the lessons we learn by experience, Debbie was convincing in her mantra that choice and destiny would ultimately prevail. And in terms of the latter, if it's your destiny to come into a shed-full of money, it will happen. I aim to keep this positivity burning brightly, hence my unwavering purchase of my weekly lotto ticket.

What do you actually do to engage with the supernatural?
I was a little taken aback when Debbie simply replied, "Nothing." I had assumed there is some form of preparatory work, akin to making a call or waiting to be allowed into the Zoom or MS Teams meeting. Debbie explained that ordinarily, she sees ghosts but rarely, if ever, discloses to others. She believes there is little point, given that she is the only person who sees what's in her supernatural vision. I suddenly felt that we were not alone. Was this attributable to the palpable suspense I had created in my own mind as a consequence of my conversation with Debbie and the questions I had framed? Part of me wanted to ask the obvious question that may resolve my dilemma, but I also wanted to test my nagging doubts with a broader exploration, which would be addressed by my final question.

To illustrate her point Debbie disclosed that whilst making dinner at home following a reading, she heard a hushed voice. The ghost who spoke to her was the son of the lady she had met earlier in the day. He had been murdered. Passing on the detailed narrative of his last moments of life to his mum helped the prosecution case that later led to the successful conviction of two men.

The only times that don't follow this traditional path engage with paranormal investigations she is called upon to research, at which Debbie uses some technical equipment, especially film recording, examples of which can be accessed on Debbie's social media platforms.

What are your personal triumphs?
Debbie's positive projection contradicted the storyline since her reply was empathetic – "Surviving childhood." Given her unusual upbringing this made perfect sense, and as she spoke about other intimate and arguably dysfunctional moments in her early life, this triumph became something to be admired.

In terms of her professional life, positive engagement with the police, providing a supportive narrative to those seeking her paranormal help, and engaging with her half a million-plus social media followers gives her the greatest satisfaction. Not to mention her television career. Pausing for a moment she added cheekily, "Not bad for a woman who was told that she would only ever be fit to sell cabbages and lemons at the local supermarket!"

What vibes are you picking up about me?
If I am totally honest this was the juncture at which I believed the pendulum would swing handsomely towards the conventional perspective. My early schooling and later university experience had been strongly influenced by science and mathematics. Indeed, my qualifying law degree only edified my comfort within facts, formulae, and fundamentally sound argument. I guess 'seeing was believing' was my comfort zone.

I had written down in advance of my time with Debbie my personal rationale, as reflected in my preamble. So how did Debbie instinctively and so precisely pick up on my grandma? Or was that just probability pushing back into my thinking? But then, I had mentioned her not just because of the lost kettle but more in terms of her impact on my upbringing, even if she hadn't been the most important person in my life. I had to concede that her observations were much more than coincidence or chance.

Equally, I had never shared my moment with Theresa with anyone before, and it had taken me years to pluck up the courage to capture this bizarre experience in words and then share it with the universe. So how come Debbie calmly and confidently captured my personal anguish in such a vivid fashion?

Following this most fascinating meeting with Debbie, I decided that at present I don't need any more interpretations of my vision – psychic, scientific, or otherwise. I will instead leave it up to you to believe in what you will. Your own life will dictate what you are prepared to explore, accept, or dismiss. I am thankful that my childlike curiosity shows little evidence of abating. Even though I remain reluctantly accepting of lost hair and greying eyebrows, amongst the other changes that aging brings, I hope I'll never tire of trying to make sense of the things that puzzle, and often overwhelm me.
In the meantime however I am certain of two things – our minds are more powerful than we can ever possibly imagine, and Debbie and I have become firm friends.

MELISA Gun

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Melisa, such an absolute honour to have you on the January cover of FHM Canada! Congratulations on being crowned Miss New York US Nation 2021, what was that experience like for you? And I'm glad to meet you too! Thanks for the question and congratulations. I still remember with awe this day and in general the whole preparation for the competition. Then I perfectly understood that the struggle for the crown would not be easy as each woman came to win. For such a competition, some special demands were put forward: you have to present yourself beautifully from the stage, have good looks and, of course, be smart and wise. And if you have all this, the victory is yours. Having received the crown, I did not even think about popularity (although it came to me immediately). What experience was that for me? Definitely priceless.

You're on your journey to taking part in the Miss Nation Universe crown, talk to us a little about that? Of course! Preparation for all beauty contests, including Miss Nation Universe, takes enough time. There are no secrets: I add more sports, I try to eat less sweet (it turns out difficult), I go to the procedures. And so life continues and no one cancelled the work. All I can do, I do/(I'm doing everything I can). And only the jury has the right to decide who is more worthy of receiving the title of the most beautiful and successful woman.

Top 3 best moments of your career? There were many of them, so it is difficult to single out only three. These are covers for top magazines such as: GRAZIA, Harper's Bazaar, FHM, LAZIN, GMARO, Playboy, TOUCH, L'Officiel. Also victories in beauty contests, travellings, acquaintances with talented people (designers, photographers, artists, businessmen). My modeling career is rapidly going up and I am not going to stop there. Going purposefully to success is like shooting at targets: it is worth shooting down one, as several more immediately appear. Such rapid changes present me with more and more obstacles. Therefore, I get true pleasure when I get up to work or go to another interview every morning. After all, all the thrill is in the process, and not in victories (although this is also nice).

What would you say gives you a unique edge in the Pageant industry? Commitment. Whatever beauty you are, but if you are lazy to follow the figure, there is no desire to go to the shoot or it is difficult to be constantly active, then your beauty will not help you. In this regard, I am demanding on myself, and sometimes even too much. If I have a goal, then I will achieve this in any way (exceptionally honest).

You currently live in New York, have you ever been to Canada, and if so what did you enjoy most about it? I have never been to Canada before, but I think I'll soon implement this plan. It seems to me that this country is simply created for travelling. Chic beaches, fjords - only for the sake of this should you come to visit. I would love to visit Niagara Falls, CNN Tower in Toronto, Old Montreal, Fundi Bay, Athabasca Falls and the famous Rocky Mountains.

What are some of your favourite things to do? All my conscious life, I go in for sports and lead a mobile lifestyle. Being active is my motto. But my list of hobbies is significant: equestrian sports, tactical shooting, rafting and chess, playing the piano, parachuting and often going in for winter swimming. Nowadays, almost every woman has a hobby. I believe that this type of activity helps the girl to develop comprehensively and fully. In addition to all my hobbies, I have a job I devote a lot of time to. Especially considering the fact that I am a doctor, and this is primarily a responsibility to people and their loved ones. Based on this, I am constantly gaining experience on the path I have chosen advanced training, seminars, lectures, webinars. At this stage, I am on the finish line - the last year of my studies at the university remains. Further in the plans - to enter the faculty of neurosurgery.

3 ultimate deal breakers when it comes to men? Their greediness, implementation failure in a career and lack of education. To this list,

add insensitivity, arrogance, predictability. For example, I am not interested in dealing with a man who does not develop, since I am the exact opposite - I never sit still and I am not content with small ones. All the listed qualities will immediately turn me away from the man, even if he is very beautiful and good at courtship.

What did yet get up to over the holidays? I'm looking forward to the New Year holidays and there are several reasons for this. Well, firstly, this is exactly the time when you can breathe out a little, spend time with loved ones or go on vacation. I'll say this, everything fades into the background when I am with my family - with my mother, sister and son. And, I always try to make the New Year not just a holiday, but a real magic for my little gentleman. You know, by this example, I teach him the important qualities that a real man should have - respect and love his current and future family, make them pleasant surprises for the holidays or just for no reason. I hope that I do well. Now I just enjoy the moment and the New Year's atmosphere in the city: everything is decorated with garlands, street fairs are with tasty food and mulled wine. It seems that at such moments you are momentarily returning to childhood and enjoying this pleasant festive fuss.

Top moments and highlights you had last year? The passing year was very busy. I want to remember these moments and share them with you. Let's start from the beginning: my interview and cover for Harper's Bazaar. I can't describe in words those emotions when I was offered to cooperate with one of the top magazines around the world. A special thank you to the talented team of professionals who made me a shoot and conducted an interview. The next important stage in my life is a large-scale show at Miami Fashion Week 2021, where top designers showed their collections. And, of course, Ms. Transcontinental 2022 in Atlanta. I won the title of Ms. "Inspiration," a successful woman who inspires. It was this project that gave me not only important experience, but also acquaintance with interesting and successful women. The program was bright: interviews, daily trips to insanely beautiful cultural sites and sights, but the Baby House forever left a mark in my heart.

What are you most looking forward to this year? No matter how corny it sounds, I wish myself health, as well as all my loved ones. Now I am actively preparing for new competitions, where I want to give all 100 percent. I pursue a rapid advance in my studies and career in the new year. Of course, in addition to this I have my own plans, I do not want to share yet. I am for what you need to immediately take and do, and not just talk. Therefore, if something important happens to me you will find out first (Smiling).

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? Recently, I have become a very active Instagram user. That's where you can watch my life. By the way, now my Direct is literally breaking up, I receive a lot of messages from my subscribers. Unfortunately, due to my constant employment and lack of free time, I rarely answer. But I am always glad to new people and grateful for such activity to those who have been with me for more than a year.

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? I wish you, dear readers, to realize yourself in every sense. Let the passing year go by with ease and open your thoughts and heart to meet new achievements. Let 2022 give you new achievements and success, as well as unforgettable emotions and amazing impressions. Remember that it is you who are capable of much, only you need to attach desire and hard work to this.

MINI'S SILENT TRENDSETTER

Ready to make the switch to an electric vehicle? Here's what you need to know about the MINI Cooper SE

It's affordable, sort of...

Normally we delay the price with a crescendo ending but with EVs suffering from a bad reputation for being far pricier than their combustion cousins, we thought we'd start with some good news – the MINI Cooper SE is a really affordable EV.

Here's some context: A BMW i3 – the closest identical twin to the MINI - and costs considerably more for which you get a slightly better range and more interior and loading space but the same performance and charging network.

Compare that pricing to MINI's petrol-engined line-up and there's a lot to choose from; the fastest and most sought after being the Cooper S JCW for similar money and the first to cross the line in a long-distance drag race. Yet these cars have completely different ideas, outlooks and ambitions, and so do their prospective owners leaving no threat of product cannibalism.

It looks like a MINI but also flies under the radar

And has bespoke upgrades too like the aerodynamic wheels (apparently inspired by a plug socket) and splashes of yellow. It's rather subtle, all things considered, and at times my own desire to be recognized as an early adopter wished it pushed the EV image a little harder, especially because your typical MINI owner has always wanted to be noticed. Inside it still uses the same cheeky and charming switchgear – a mix of toggle switches, touch screen and rotary dial – and the dimensions are similar which highlights the evolution of battery technology and the minimal compromises in what must be the most challenging of EV packages.

Some options, in the interest of price, weren't present like a reverse camera and keyless entry but they did very little to diminish the Cooper's appeal and if a slightly more spartan approach is needed to make EVs more accessible, I'm all for it.

MINI Go-Kart handling

Let it be clear that all EVs drive similarly thanks to over-arching tenets like regenerative braking, lack of gears (despite a normal gear lever), and instant power delivery. So how does MINI differentiate itself? Well, it's compact for starters so it tucks into corners with less fuss and the hunkered-down center of gravity and low ride height help glue it to the road.

More weight, around 330 pounds and packaged low, helps inject some calmness into the dampers, resulting in the Cooper SE being the most comfortable and compliant MINIs on sale, and obviously the quietest too. It's not just fast on a straight road but occasionally when driven hard, wheel slip results in some sudden interventions from the battery supply. Three driving modes are probably the closest reminder of a petrol-powered car and even in 'Mid', one might even be bold enough to label the Cooper SE a bonafide hot hatch with the front wheels scrabbling for grip as its potent

performance is unleashed. Around back roads and suburbs, you'll struggle to find something that keeps up! It's a go-kart, or should that be a golf cart?

From charge to charge

The cheapest EV on sale does have some drawbacks, the biggest being range. With a full charge, one needs to be fairly alert and wide awake to its 93-mile range although we never came close to draining it on a daily commute. Equipped with the normal charger, we left it on overnight and that was more than sufficient to replenish the battery, while real-world ownership would likely include the purchase of a which can do it significantly quicker. Don't forget BMW and MINI dealerships offer fast charging bays (which are always conspicuously available) and will throw in some WiFi and coffee while you wait.

Off-peak charging times can also be set via the onboard system which in general didn't provide me with the sort of data and graphics I needed to fully understand what was going on, and why. It's absolutely true that range anxiety stems from the unknown, so a few more driving tips and displays about energy management is vitally important to build that trust.

Final words

The MINI Cooper SE embraces EV motoring landscape better than anything else on the market. It's fun, entertaining and even brings some common sense to how people should use their EVs, rather than hypothetical scenarios aimed to undermine EVs. Rather than tackling the topic of long distances, the MINI Cooper SE instead focuses on the 90% of driving that people actually do.

Pawan Dhingara

COMMAND AND CONQUER

The latest diesel engine ensures that the G-Class stays true to its roots

The G-Class, or Gelandewagen for the purists, has always been a bit of an outlier in Merc's sleek and AI-filled portfolio: changing user demands as well as tighter emission controls and safety standards have painted in the G-Class as its own island, with its own rules. Add to that a price tag that feels more Maybach than Merc and you're left with a very unique collection, contradiction, and celebration of ideas.

However the new G-Class, thanks to a number of incremental refinements and customization options, is perhaps more comfortable in an urban environment than has ever been the case but you're still reminded that there is an excessive range of abilities that stretch far beyond what life can throw your way. In that sense, the G-Class is almost tragically over-engineered, but that's also its stubborn appeal.

For 2021 the G-Class was handed subtle tweaks and a G400d variant that helps to tone down the package and instill some common, real 4x4íng, sense.

The connection to its military background is emphasized by a new Emerald Green color, making it seem like it's about to receive its next top-secret mission orders. The flanks are defined by wide arches joined to a tall boxy body with not a lot of thought given to aerodynamics. Modern features like the intelligent headlights and puddle lamps are juxtaposed by some crude touches like the heavy door handles and rear-mounted wheel. It's a bold intimidating vehicle that has other motorists jumping out the way as soon as they catch sight of it in their rear-view mirror. The package retains strong design tributes to its ancestors, my favorite being the raised indicators on the edges of front fenders; put there to help you guide the car through narrow spaces or keep the front axle on a fine line over a rocky section.

Thunk. That's just the impregnable sound of the doors automatically locking once on the move, as if someone has closed the hatch on a submarine. Before that, however, you'll most likely have needed to slam the heavy door twice or more before it closes properly... Hardly a premium first impression!

The G-Class still makes do Merc's previous generation Command system which seemed adequate until I climbed into a Mercedes GLE a few days later, fitted with the new MBUX system. Mercedes Command is a fine enough

system – and in the context of the car, it's in feels like a revelation - but lacks a lot of the complex voice commands, clearer graphics, and gesture-controlled surfaces of the newer system.

Off-road buttons take pride of place (three differential settings are where most car designers put the air vents) and the flat vertical dashboard still feels as though it's mounted directly to the car's chassis. Money has been spent on the leather, stitching, the thousands of ambient light options, and the Burmeister audio system, and of course, its hand-built construction is Graz, Austria. But you don't get USB C ports or wireless charging which hints at the package's underlying age. Previous G-Class stumbled around like they were drunk, a characteristic that was blamed on the old recirculating ball steering. Over the last five years, Merc has upgraded that to an additional rack and pinion which brings more polite and compliant road manners. You sit high and upright and the short overhangs, high bonnet, and myriad cameras, ensure the G-Class isn't the blunt wayward tool around town that one might assume.

The self-leveling air suspension works hard to push those square patches of rubber down onto the road, fighting physics, and a 5450lbs curb weight, and although it's not positioned as a driver's car, it'll still do 0-60mph in 6.4 seconds and a top speed of 130m/h.

The 3.0-liter straight-six turbo diesel, with a linear curve of in torque through all 700Nm, is exactly what serious off-roaders look for in an engine - so as not to disturb traction at a crawling speed. This is an engine that you'll find (and want) in an E-Class and S-Class, so there's no doubt that it's been developed to deliver luxurious pulling power, with low noise and vibration. Fortunately, the engineers haven't sacrificed parts of its personality when placed in a tougher set of work boots.

This is a calm and evenly-tempered engine and in our opinion brings a lot of rationality to the package with fair fuel consumption (11l/100km on the open road) weighed up against more accessible day-to-day performance.

The reaction toward the G-Class hasn't changed. Onlookers stop and stare in awe as it roars by and despite so many faster or modern vehicles at the price, they don't command the same aspirational appeal and respect that the G-Class does. It might look one-dimensional at first glance but on the contrary, the G-Class is a complex slab of machinery, suitable for a variety of people and tastes. Thanks to the addition of the G400d, it now plays to more of its actual strengths, more of the time.

Pawan Dhingara

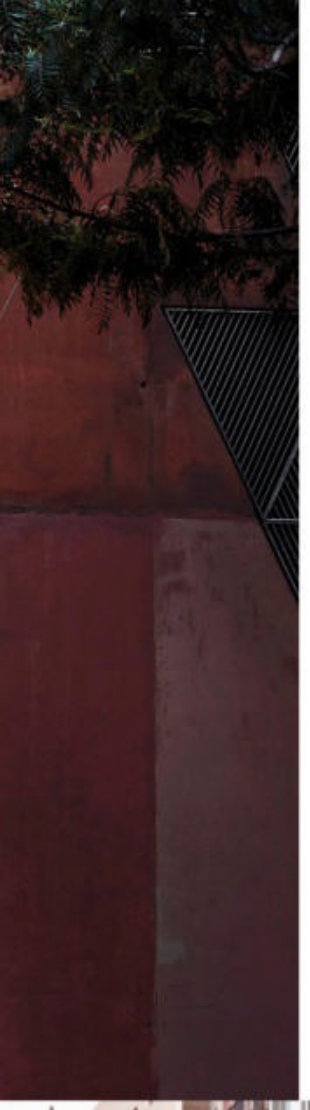
SWEDISH HARMONY

Modern Engine Brings Infinite Balance to the Range

Volvo's SUV market relies heavily on a three-pronged XC SUV range and at the base sits the XC40, recently refreshed with a new T4 variant that at least on paper seems to be the final piece of the Swedish jigsaw puzzle.

Up close there isn't a lot to differentiate the T4 from its siblings, except for that very discreet badge on the boot lid. Nevertheless, the Inscription model on test isn't showing any wrinkles. It still looks sophisticated with taut lines giving it a lean and muscular stance. It's a boxy little number riding on big, low-profile rubber but because it's front-wheel drive, the chiseled appearance is not compromised by superfluous off-road cladding. The SUV shape is therefore purely to give the driver the best view possible while compact overhangs see it fit into regular parking spots without blaring the park distance sensors. Whereas so many other brands have been guilty of holding back certain elements for their more premium models, the XC40's abbreviated size doesn't result in fewer toys or cheaper materials. Suffice to say, if you've sat in one Volvo in the last five years, you've sat in them all - although I suspect the XC40's customers are new to the brand and will instantly be charmed by the design.

Admittedly our test model was fitted with lots of costly extras that mainly emphasizes the autonomous driving and audio system. A large portrait screen that responds to the same gestures as a smartphone remains the focal point but fortunately, it doesn't feel overly digital when surrounded by eye-catching tactile



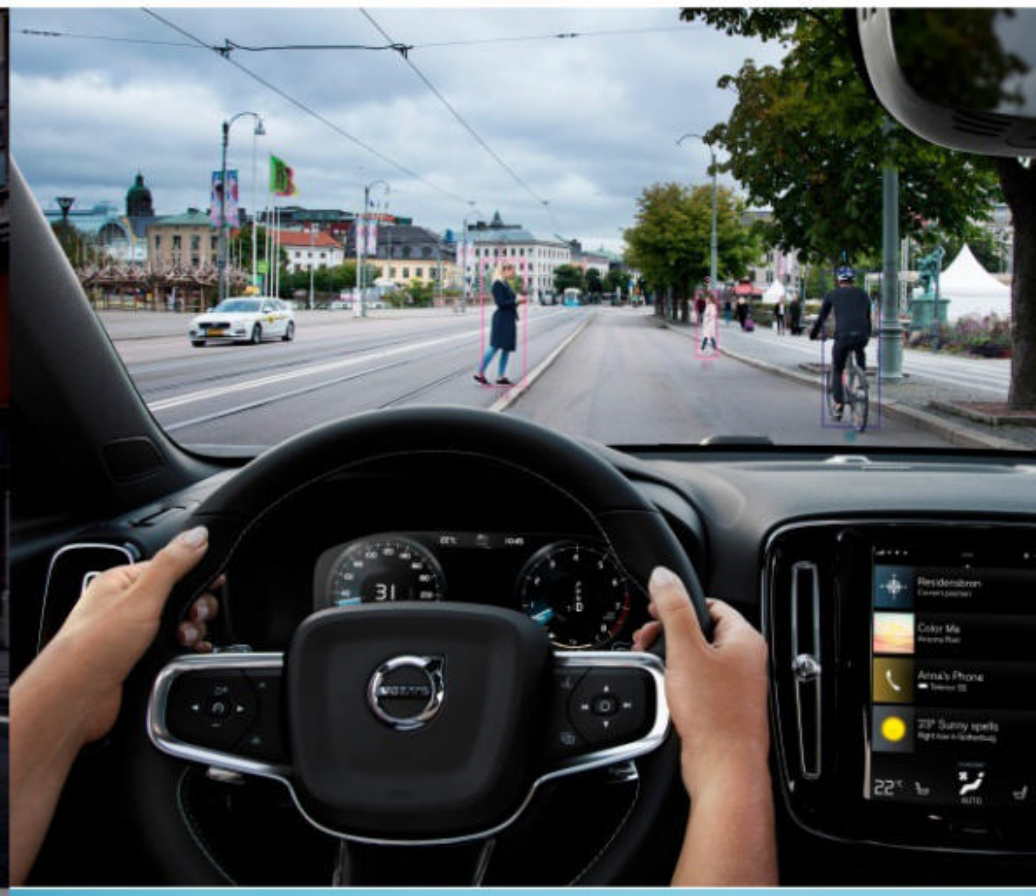
finishes pronounced by metal bezels that simply look (and feel) of a higher quality than you'll get this side of a Bentley. As usual, if you're going to spend longer than an hour in a car, these are the seats you want your bones to melt into and although the rear windows are cropped by the roofline, there's decent space for rear passengers and a boot that can offer similar loading volume to a normal hatchback.

The XC40 mirrors a lot of technology from Volvo's bigger offerings, often bundled as packages. The Driver Assist Package on this model includes, blind-spot monitoring with cross-traffic alert and pilot assist with adaptive cruise control. Standard features include keyless entry, inductive charging, front and rear cameras with park assist, and a power tailgate.

Volvo's 2.0-liter engine, on the other hand, isn't nearly as colorful. It's not particularly sporty and you won't find shift paddles or a multiple driving modes that unlock new layers of enjoyment near the red line. However, the lazy revving nature matches the rest of the package in a very disarming way. But we can't accuse it of being sluggish, thanks to a claimed 0-100kph time in 8.4 seconds which is about two seconds faster or slower versus the T3 and T5 models that bookend it.

Nevertheless, those potential buyers who were skeptical of a 3-cylinder engine in a posh SUV will at least feel reassured by the T4's extra cylinder and the safer overtaking power it provides, even if a more powerful Volvo has never been the Swedish company's main focus. Others might feel the T4's higher price edges it a little too close to the bigger XC60.

Pawan Dhingara



EATERY

With the state of current affairs, everyone is still trying to keep their distance and going out to eat might not be as appealing as it once was. No worries, now's the time to whip out the ingredients and call upon your inner chef and get cooking and here are some awesome recipes straight from the kitchen of our fantastic food editor to get you started!

By Izelle Hoffman

TEA AND PEAR OATS

Prep time: 5 minutes
Cooking time: 10–15 minutes
Servings: 2

Ingredients

- 1 cup freshly brewed vanilla-flavored tea
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1 cup gluten-free rolled oats
- 1 can unsweetened pear halves, drained and rinsed
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 heaped tsp almond butter
- 1 tbsp vanilla essence
- 1 tbsp caramel essence
- 1 tbsp raw honey
- fresh mint for garnishing

Instructions

Allow the tea to brew for about 10 minutes while cooling off.

Heat the almond milk in a large saucepan over medium heat to about the same temperature as the tea. Add the tea to the milk and then stir in the oats.

Add the pears, salt, cinnamon, almond butter, vanilla essence, caramel essence, and honey, and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes or until the mixture starts to thicken.

Garnish with fresh mint and serve immediately while lovely and warm.

Note: If vanilla-flavored tea is unavailable, you may use plain tea, although the vanilla does add a certain "wow" factor.

APPLE CRUMBLE OVERNIGHT OATS

Prep time: 10 minutes
Refrigeration time: Ideally overnight
Servings: 2

Ingredients

- 1 cup gluten-free rolled oats
- 2 cups unsweetened almond milk
- 1 tbsp melted almond butter
- 1 tbsp raw honey
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp caramel essence

Toppings

- sliced fresh apple
- raisins
- ground cinnamon
- toasted flaked almonds
- raw honey

Instructions

In a mixing bowl, combine all of the ingredients and refrigerate overnight to set.

Serve the next day topped with apple, raisins, cinnamon, toasted flaked almonds and a drizzle of honey.

Note: Replace the apple slices with fresh blueberries or strawberries for another variation.

QUINOA AND CHICKPEA HASH BROWNS

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 10 minutes
Servings: 6 to 8 hashbrowns

Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 can chickpeas, drained, rinsed and pulped
- 1 small red salad onion, diced
- 1 tsp dried parsley
- 1 tsp chopped fresh ginger
- 1 tsp crushed garlic
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- ¼ tsp chili flakes (optional)
- 2 tbsp raw honey
- 1 handful of chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 eggs, whisked
- 2 tbsp almond flour
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- poached eggs, Viavi avocados and fresh rocket for serving

Instructions

Combine the cooked quinoa, chickpeas, onion, parsley, ginger, garlic, salt, pepper, chili flakes (if using), honey and cilantro in a mixing bowl.

Add the whisked eggs and mix well, then add almond flour until you reach your preferred consistency.

Using your hands, form the mixture into hash browns of whatever size you prefer.

Heat the olive oil in a frying pan and cook the hash browns on both sides until brown and crisp – about 10 minutes. Be careful, as they will only start firming up properly once cooked and cooled.

Serve with poached eggs, avocado and fresh rocket.

Note: You can use these hash browns as vegetarian burger patties too.

QUICK AND EASY CREAMY AVO FONDUE

Prep time: 5min
Cooking time: 10-15min
Servings: 2

Ingredients

- 2 cups unsweetened almond milk
- 1 avocado, mashed
- 1 can of butterbeans rinsed, drained and mashed
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 tsp crushed garlic
- 2 tbsp raw honey
- 2 tsp oregano
- 1/2 tsp chili flakes
- hot water as needed

Instructions

Make use of a medium pot and prepare with a nonstick spray.

Pour the almond milk in the pot, add the mashed avocado and mashed butterbeans and stir well.

Add the rest of the ingredients and allow to heat up till it starts to boil - this can be done on the stove or even the barbeque!

Turn the temperature down and allow to simmer for a few minutes before serving.

One can adjust the thickness as desired by adding boiling hot water.

Ideal to store in the fridge, just add a bit of boiling water when reheating and allow to simmer for a few minutes.

Serve with chicken strips, wings or drumsticks, beef strips, meatballs, roasted cauliflower florets, breadsticks, jerky or any other savory biscuit of your choice.

ASIAN-STYLE CHICKEN

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 45 minutes
Servings: 4 to 6

Ingredients

- 2 large spring onions, diced
- 1 small red bell pepper, deseeded and diced
- 1 small yellow bell pepper, deseeded and diced
- 1 small green bell pepper, deseeded and diced
- 6 chicken fillets or 9 drumsticks and thighs
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ¼ cup hot water
- chopped fresh cilantro and spring onion for garnishing

Marinade

- juice of 1 lime
- ¼ cup of soy sauce
- 2 tbsp raw honey
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp crushed garlic
- 1 heaped tbsp sesame seeds
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- ½ tsp crushed ginger (optional)
- 1 handful of chopped fresh cilantro

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 395F (200C) and spray an ovenproof dish with nonstick cooking spray.

Spread the diced spring onions and bell peppers on the base of the greased dish.

Brush the chicken pieces with the olive oil and place on top of the onions and peppers.

Pour the hot water around the chicken.

Mix the sauce ingredients in a small bowl and pour over the chicken pieces.

Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes, then remove the foil and bake uncovered for a further 15 minutes, occasionally basting the chicken pieces with the sauce in the dish.

Garnish with chopped fresh cilantro and spring onion before serving.

Ideal with a side salad, roast vegetables, and basmati rice or quinoa, and long-stem broccoli florets, of course.

FHM

Chey Starr

Model | @cherrystar_

Photographer Kevin Talley | @kevintalleyphoto
PR Moda | @moda_modeling_group

STAG
Blanton's
TAYLOR
OLD FORESTER

Such an absolute honor to have you on feature FHM! What has your journey as a certified bombshell been like so far? Certified bombshell huh? Lol I don't know I think you're giving me a little too much credit, but so far, it's been a long, arduous journey both mentally and physically.

We are blown away by your drive and professionalism. Can you tell us what some of the things that motivate you to stay on top of your game are? Thank you so much! Well, my followers on Instagram know this because I preach it all the time, but I don't believe in motivation. Motivation is fleeting but consistency and discipline for my future self is what keeps me in the game both mentally and physically. It's about me holding me accountable in every aspect of my life.

Top 3 best moments of your career? Well, this feature in your premier magazine publication for starters! My personal fitness program launching soon and launching my emerging "Tom Boy Chic" clothing line For Her @forherofficial_.

What is your favorite chill time activity? I take the time to stretch and listen to calming music when I have a free moment. It's so healthy for the body and mind.

We are taking you out on your ultimate date and we really want to knock this one out of the ballpark, what would that entail? Anything risky, active, and competitive — either dirt bikes, hiking, some physical competition, etc. (I'd love to learn how to drift.) Just get me outdoors and moving and I'm a happy girl.

What are, hands down, your absolute favorite things to do? Taking a recreational dance class (dance has always been my escape, my release) or traveling to a new place that's scenic.

3 ultimate deal-breakers when it comes to men? Well, if he's seeing multiple women... that's an immediate no. If he's not an active person and doesn't prioritize health and fitness. If he doesn't have the will to explore and experience new things then it's most definitely not going to work out.

You have one last chance to do something you have always wanted to do, with no limits on anything, what are you doing? Wow, well it's more than one, but: 1. Going to Iceland to swim in the blue lagoon, 2. Race quads across the black sand beaches and 3. Hike to see the northern lights.

Where would you say is your favorite place to be in the world and why? Well, I've been to Europe several times and Africa once but my answer to this every time is, Utah here in the states. I absolutely love Utah, it's stunning. There's so much to do and see, the hiking is spectacular and I love the people.

What is currently playing on loop on your playlist? A lot of Glass Animals, Bishop Briggs, and Dermot Kennedy. All very smooth and bluesy artists.

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? My Instagram @cheystarr__ is where I am extremely interactive with my little community. I'm not afraid to be a little self-deprecating and I get real goofy and real about life! So get ready!

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? Stay consistent and stay disciplined because motivation alone is fleeting. I wish I would have learned that sooner.

FORESTER
BIRTHDAY
TAYLOR
COLONEL E.H.
STRAIGHT RYE
BOTTLED IN BOND

STAG
OLD FORESTER
JIM BEAM

Weed Accessory!

A smell-proof bud bag

DON'T GET CAUGHT

WITH STINKY WEED & STUFF!

Whether you tried smoking weed before or currently do, you have most likely been through a scenario where someone has almost caught you with it because of the smell coming out of the zip-lock bag or wherever else you are carrying it around in. Well, welcome to the new world, where there are products and ways to hide that smell and enjoy those flowers!

We caught up with cannabis expert and innovative designer/CEO Philip Li to learn more about how the weed industry has changed and how new products are coming out to help mask smells and adapt to this new world.

How has the cannabis space changed over the past 12 months in general? So much has changed! Cannabis is not only getting widely accepted but we find more adults using it and introducing it into their everyday lifestyle. We're seeing a huge surge for cannabis as an alternative therapeutic outlet since the pandemic started. Cannabis companies, I feel, have a newfound fire ignited back into them and are rushing to get in on this wave of demand.

Why is it more important now than ever that companies continue to innovate their products geared towards this growing industry? The user demographic is changing rapidly. The stereotypical 'stoner' is long gone. You have from your college students to first-time parents to seniors using cannabis. Recently there's been an influx of working professionals with real spending money who are starting to get into cannabis. Their taste in goods and their lifestyle are elevated to higher standards which dictates the products they will be purchasing to suit their lifestyle. Gone are the days of wooden boxes, obnoxious 'in your face' cannabis designs. They prefer more modern, low-key and premium items now.

We all remember our parents or teachers "catching us with weed" growing up. While things legally have changed around the world, your products have literally saved students and other people's lives by allowing them NOT to get caught with their weed, since your stuff is smell-proof. Why was ensuring the smell-proof cases so important to you when creating the products? A lot of smaller and niche brands are starting to pop up, taking everyday cannabis accessories and redefining them in their own ways like we are with our stash boxes and storage cases. Incredibly curious as to what comes out.

Anything else fun you'd like to add or include for our readers? I believe every cannabis user from beginner to connoisseur needs to have a central storage place for all your cannabis flowers, oils, edibles, and accessories. It's also a lot better to know that the storage case can contain the smell perfectly. That anxiety absolutely sucks and I don't want anyone to go through that!

Killaks
RAW
RAW

FRANCK MULLER
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ECJ LUXE
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